

Driffield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118078
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	379537
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Gina White 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	Not Applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,851
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	313
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Storey
Headteacher	Simon Jones(Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2006
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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 58 lessons taught by 58 different teachers. They held meetings with staff, groups of students and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including data concerning students' progress and records relating to the care and safeguarding of students, the minutes of meetings and school action plans and evaluations. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and 321 parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- How leaders and managers tackled the issues from the previous inspection to improve the monitoring of students' welfare and learning by pastoral and subject leaders.
- Students' attainment and the progress students make, especially different groups of students and those with higher levels of attainment on entry to the sixth form.
- How effectively changes to the curriculum meet the needs of students and provide opportunities for students to develop skills to support independent learning.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average size secondary school and serves a wide area, with over half of the students travelling some distance from rural villages. It is an extended school and since 2006 has had specialist status as a mathematics and computing college. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Few students are from minority ethnic groups and almost all students speak English as their first language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average and the proportion who has a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The school holds Healthy School status.

The headteacher is seconded to the National College of School Leadership and an acting headteacher is currently leading the school.

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

Driffield School provides a good standard of education for its students. Students enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. They say they feel safe at school. Good leadership and management give high priority to students' safety and welfare. The school's arrangements to safeguard students are excellent. Care, guidance and support for students are good. The house system helps pastoral and subject staff to support students effectively and ensures that they are well prepared for learning. Parents and carers are supportive of the school and the good impact it has on their children's achievement. School data and information collected during the inspection show that the large majority of students make good progress, achieve well in their learning and attain above average results in examinations. Regular and effective checking of students' performance and swift provision of support are good in the main school. However, monitoring and intervention in the sixth form are not demonstrating the same positive impact. Consequently, most students who enter the sixth form with high levels of attainment at Key Stage 4 do not achieve as well as they could.

The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers' secure subject knowledge and effective management of lessons help most students to progress at a good rate. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully accelerated learning for some able, gifted and talented students in mathematics. This excellent practice is not widespread across all subjects and all groups of students because teachers' use of assessment to tailor learning precisely and to provide high quality feedback to students varies. Students' behaviour overall is good in lessons and when moving around the school site. Most students are polite and have a strong sense of fair play and respect. The school has made significant steps forward in improving and raising expectations of good behaviour. However, a small minority of students, parents and carers are concerned about the inequitable use of and inconsistency in applying sanctions. The school leadership team acknowledges that there is still work to do in securing consistency in implementing aspects of new policies, such as behaviour.

The curriculum is good in the main school and in the sixth form centre. Since the previous inspection, improvements have ensured that the curriculum is well organised and focused on giving students the best options in their future choices. The breadth of extra-curricular activities enriches and promotes students' education. Students' contribution to the school community is outstanding. They undertake an

enormous range of roles, including trained reading mentors, anti-bullying mentors, community sports leaders and school council members. Together with opportunities to lead activities and charity support work, these make a strong contribution to student's leadership skill, independence and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. The school shares its best practice widely with other schools and makes effective use of partnerships to extend provision and support for its students. The part played by middle leaders in ensuring that agreed practice is consistently pursued is good in some cases, but not all. The monitoring of behaviour, the use of assessment to inform lesson planning and the quality of marking to ensure that it is evaluative and helpful to students are variable. As a result, these aspects of the school's work are not fully embedded throughout the school.

The actions of the senior leadership team and staff have ensured improvements have been made since the previous inspection. This, together with continued good achievement and students above average attendance, demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure middle leaders secure consistency across their teams in applying the behaviour policy and in marking and giving feedback to students to support them in improving their learning and progress.
- Ensure that sixth form monitoring is rigorous and leads to timely intervention to enable all students to achieve as well as they should.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students enjoy lessons. They listen attentively to teachers and others and respond enthusiastically when given opportunities to debate and work collaboratively. Most students enter the school with above average attainment and they make good progress by Year 11 to achieve consistently above average examination results. Attainment has improved steadily over time and the 2011 provisional results confirm this trend. In examinations, the attainment and progress of some groups of students, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, were not as strong as the majority of students. The school has put in place a number of strategies, including a more flexible curriculum, and tightly-focused mentoring support to tackle these issues. They are already helping students in their learning. The progress and attainment of boys compared to girls have improved in mathematics, but the gap has grown in English. Robust and timely systems are firmly in place to monitor students' progress. Students' current work in lessons indicates that the majority of students, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now making good progress. Above average attendance and above average attainment in mathematics and computing contribute significantly to the development of students'

good workplace skills. Positive relationships between most adults and students are based on trust and good humour. Students are confident that issues of bullying and any concerns about safety would be dealt with effectively. They speak with pride and enjoyment about their contribution to the school community and their work with students from the local special school. A variety of sporting activities and the option to eat healthily contribute well to students' healthy lifestyles. Students' social and moral skills are well developed. Their spirituality and cultural understanding and the challenge to racism and prejudice are promoted effectively in lessons.

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?

Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to challenge and probe students understanding through sharply focused questioning. As a result, misconceptions in students' learning are tackled effectively and sustain students' interest. The best lessons are characterised by an appropriate pace to learning. Well-established routines and the use of strategies, such as paired learning and discussion, ensure that time is used effectively to promote high levels of engagement and to accelerate learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed and contribute effectively to ensure students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are engaged throughout the lesson and this supports their progress. In such lessons, the assessment of students' prior learning informs the choices teachers make about tasks and activities. They frequently break learning into smaller steps so that students build up a bank of skills to tackle assignments. For example, discussions about family Christmas traditions enabled students to empathise with the characters in 'A Christmas Carol' and to develop an autobiographical style to their writing. Teaching is weaker in some lessons because learning objectives are insufficiently focused on specific subject skills and teachers' expectations of students' speaking skills are inconsistent. Marking and feedback to students varies in the impact it has in ensuring students receive clear direction about how to improve. This is because in a minority of subjects too little attention is given to subject-specific skills and knowledge and the focus is merely on effort and completion of work.

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

Good curricular provision in the school is underpinned by personalised programmes that provide greater flexibility in meeting the changing needs of students. Focus days are used effectively to enrich students’ learning and enjoyment of school life. Local partnerships with other schools and colleges contribute to a wider range of initiatives and programmes for students. The needs of less-able and potentially vulnerable students are met through bespoke courses. The choice of specific units of study is frequently informed by students’ interests and this has a positive impact on their attendance and progress. A wealth of extra-curricular activities and school productions remain highly popular with students, parents and carers.

Skilled pastoral staff are effective in identifying students in need of care and support. Partnerships with specialist services are integrated well to support students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and have most need to overcome barriers to their learning. Transition arrangements into school and beyond are good. Students say the advice and guidance they receive help them feel confident in making decisions at key points in their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governing body and senior leaders successfully convey their drive for improvement to students, parents and carers and staff. School plans are tightly focused on the key areas to secure improvement. Increased use and analysis of data are used effectively to set targets, and systems to check progress are robust. The impact is seen in students’ good outcomes and in improvements since the last inspection in the quality of teaching and curricular provision. Senior managers are holding middle leaders to account for performance in subject departments but recognise that they need to make urgent changes to their monitoring schedules. This is to ensure all middle leaders are sufficiently skilled to play their role in tackling the inconsistencies and ensure that students' achievement and teaching develop securely to be outstanding. The governing body meets its responsibilities well, particularly in relation to financial matters and in ensuring excellent systems for safeguarding. Robust policies and regular safeguarding training ensure staff are highly skilled and knowledgeable. Members of the governing body are well informed and are developing their role in evaluating the school with the support of senior leaders. The governing body acknowledges the difficulties in engaging hard-to-reach parents and carers and in establishing community cohesion in the more isolated parts of the rural area. Nonetheless, the school makes effective use of its website and school events to exchange information and views with parents and carers. Equality of opportunity is well promoted, for example, in ensuring transport arrangements enable all students to access the broad range of extra-curricular activities. The school has high expectations of staff to act as role models in treating all people equally and with

respect but this is undermined by a lack of training to enable them consistently and confidently to undertake this role. Senior staff understand the needs of their community and make effective use of partnerships to promote a wide range of activity to support community cohesion. The school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for the 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
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	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

Sixth form

Students enter the sixth form with high levels of prior attainment. By the end of Year 13, students achieve above average results but there is much variation in their progress between courses and not all students achieve as highly as they could. Nevertheless, a high proportion of students move onto college or university. A wider range of courses is well suited to students’ needs and, for some, their academic aspirations. Students are pleased with their courses and, as a result, more students continue with them. The quality of teaching is good overall and a small proportion of lessons are outstanding. Leaders and managers are aware of the shortcomings in students’ progress. They have increased the capacity of the leadership and management team and are taking the necessary corrective action. The current monitoring of students’ progress is sharply focused but tracking and intervention are not timely enough to ensure students achieve in line with their high levels of attainment on entry to the sixth form.

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	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Of those parents and carers who returned questionnaires, a large majority are highly satisfied and feel that the school meets their children’s needs. They are happy with the quality of teaching the school provides. Around 13% of parents and carers feel the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns.

Inspectors found that although the views of parents and carers are used generally to inform key discussions and decision-making, parents and carers are not always kept updated. A small number are concerned about consistency in aspects of the schools' work including behaviour, assessment, marking and feedback about their children's progress. Inspectors found that securing consistency in implementing classroom procedures and policies is a current priority for the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Driffield 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 321 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,851 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	100	31	197	61	20	6	4	1
The school keeps my child safe	118	37	193	60	8	2	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	102	32	171	53	31	10	8	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	108	34	173	54	23	7	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	101	31	191	60	17	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	21	193	60	40	12	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	21	198	62	38	12	2	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)	107	33	169	53	15	5	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	97	30	187	58	21	7	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	93	29	161	50	33	10	12	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	66	21	172	54	32	10	10	3
The school is led and managed effectively	99	31	177	55	23	7	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	128	40	163	51	24	7	3	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 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.



18 November 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Driffield School and Sixth Form Centre, Driffield, YO25 5HR

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school and for your assistance. I am pleased to report that your school provides you with a good education and some features are outstanding. These are the things we found during our visit.

- Your results in examinations are above average and most teachers use their good subject knowledge very well in lessons to make learning interesting and ensure that you make good progress. The curriculum is good and a wider range of courses and programmes is meeting your interests and needs. Most of you enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities and they contribute well to your learning.
- You behave well in lessons and around the school and have developed a strong sense of justice and respect for each other and staff. Some of you want the inconsistencies in applying aspects of the behaviour policy to be resolved.
- You make an outstanding contribution to the school community and readily take on a range of responsibilities to help others in the school and through your charity work. The school places a high priority on your welfare and safety and the arrangements they make to keep you from harm are outstanding. You told us that you feel safe in school.

The school is well led and the acting headteacher, staff and governors are keen to bring about further improvements to help you achieve the best you can. To help them I have asked the school to:

- make sure that middle leaders secure consistency across their teams in applying the behaviour policy and in their marking and feedback to you to support you in improving your learning and progress
- make sure that checking of students' progress in the sixth form is rigorous and timely to enable all of you to achieve as well as you can.

Yours sincerely,

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector

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