

Longcroft School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118073
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	379536
Inspection dates	18–19 April 2012
Lead inspector	Marianne Young HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,468
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Wigley
Headteacher	Ian O'Donnell
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2009
School address	Burton Road Molescroft Beverley HU17 7EJ
Telephone number	01482 862171
Fax number	01482 862872
Email address	school@longcroft.eriding.net



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Marianne Young
Geraldine Hutchinson
Janet Pruchniewicz
Pankaj Gulab
Tony Price

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 43 lessons taught by a similar number of teachers and three of these lessons were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, teachers, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and groups of students. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions were also held with students at social times. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers who had contacted them by telephone. A number of documents, provided by leaders to support their view of provision, were scrutinised by inspectors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They also considered the 467 inspection questionnaire responses from parents and carers and to those questionnaires returned by staff and a representative sample of students.

Information about the school

Longcroft School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals, although increasing, is below the national average. The vast majority of students are White British. The proportion of students who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The school occupies a split site. Students have to walk some distance between the upper and lower school buildings for different lessons. In 2011, the school met the government's minimum floor standard for secondary schools.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2011. Several members of the senior leadership team, although not new to the school, now have re-defined roles and responsibilities, some of which they have assumed very recently.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than, in all the circumstances, it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the progress students make, the standards they attain and the quality of teaching. There has been insufficient good or better teaching to ensure improved progress and standards over time, not only in English and mathematics but also across all subjects. Consequently, all students, particularly those known to be eligible for free school meals, have underachieved since the previous inspection. The school is not satisfactory because over time, weaknesses in teaching have led to students underachieving.
- Students socialise together sensibly. Movement around the large site is generally orderly and the vast majority of students take responsibility for themselves and arrive punctually to lessons. Attendance has improved and the proportion of students who are persistently absent has decreased.
- The sixth form is satisfactory, overall. However, the current admission policy and the choice of subjects offered are limiting the life chances of some students who find completing the mainly academic courses challenging. While there are some strengths in teaching in the sixth form, too often students are simply given information by the teachers and the weaknesses noted in the quality of teaching in the main school were evident.
- The headteacher has accurately identified the weaknesses within the school and for all key groups of students and provided clarity about improving provision. Within a short time, he has put into place a number of systems and procedures so that all leaders are accountable, and fully understand their roles and his expectations. Teachers reported to inspectors that ‘there is nowhere to hide; we are accountable.’ Members of the governing body understand how to hold leaders to account and consequently there is a transparency and sharing

of ideas. Importantly, leaders recognise the need and urgency to ensure that these systems have a positive impact on the progress students make.

- Although behaviour is satisfactory, there are aspects requiring improvement. In particular, leaders have identified that more needs to be done especially when students move from one building to another. The majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire raised concerns about students' behaviour and the lack of communication between themselves and the school. Leaders recognise that the latter needs to be improved so that parents and carers are fully involved in their children's education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to accelerate the progress students make and therefore raise standards across the curriculum by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of students capabilities, particularly those known to be eligible for free school meals
 - ensuring that all available data are used by teachers to plan lessons that fully meet the different needs of all students
 - ensuring that students understand and can identify how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
 - making sure that teaching assistants are deployed effectively in lessons.
- Expand the choice of subjects available to students in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form and ensure that literacy and numeracy skills are developed in all subjects.
- Fully embed the newly implemented policies and procedures, especially those relating to tracking progress, by ensuring that all leaders take full responsibility for students' progress.
- Strengthen and develop communication with parents and carers by:
 - making them aware of how well their children are doing
 - ensuring that any concerns raised are investigated and the findings reported to them.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Students' attainment at the end of the Year 11 in the key indicator of five GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, although broadly average, did not increase in 2011. However, the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE grades A* to C was significantly below that seen nationally. Students continue to do well in a few subjects, for example art and design, drama and physical education. Predicted results and current data indicate that students should achieve better results this year in mathematics. This is due to improvements in the quality of

teaching for these students and the support and additional classes provided for them out of lesson time.

Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs attain broadly in line with similar students nationally because of the individual support they receive. Some teachers are more adept than others at making the best use of teaching assistants; however, too often, their skills are underused. Senior leaders are aware that students known to be eligible for free school meals are not attaining as well as they should and the gap between them and other students needs to close more quickly. Students' attainment when they start secondary school is broadly average but over time, they make inadequate progress.

Senior leaders recognise there is very little evidence of students applying literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects. The lack of an overall strategy restricts the development of these skills, particularly in reading. Although there are opportunities for students to discuss their learning, read and present information to their peers within lessons, these features are not found in all subjects.

In the sixth form, students' attainment is broadly satisfactory at the end of Year 13 and students make satisfactory progress. Attainment on entry to the sixth form has remained constant since the previous inspection and students make good progress in Year 12, but do not sustain this in Year 13. Students make best progress in biology, government and politics, and media studies. Outcomes in law and English literature are particularly noteworthy. Leaders are aware that the entry policy to the sixth form has been too lenient in the past and therefore, not all students are able to fulfil the rigours of the courses currently offered.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is inadequate. Over time, weak teaching and teachers' low expectations of students' capabilities have meant that students of all abilities have not made appropriate progress and underachievement has persisted. Teachers do not make use of the available information about students' capabilities when they plan lessons and students are concerned whether they are challenged sufficiently. Students also have concerns about how they should improve their work. Students' views regarding what they are given to do in lessons was summed up by one student who reported: 'In lessons with a wide range of abilities, the more able are not pushed or challenged enough – they are taught the same as the whole class'. All these concerns, including those raised by students, have been identified by senior leaders during their routine monitoring and were confirmed by inspectors.

Responses from the questionnaires completed by parents and carers indicated that many are concerned about disruption in lessons and how they can help their children's learning. Inspectors observed very little disruption in lessons and, when it did occur, it was because the tasks provided did not enthuse or engage students sufficiently.

Senior leaders have identified where practice is strong in all key stages. A strength common to the vast majority of lessons was the positive relationships and respect demonstrated by students, especially when they worked together. Teachers' high

expectations, helpful feedback and students actively involved in lessons are commonplace. These strengths were evident in a science lesson. In this, students were immediately involved in learning, they challenged each other during group work and understood what they had to learn. As a result they enjoyed the lesson and made rapid progress. However, these features are not present in enough lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students reported that they feel safe and understand how to identify any potential hazards. School records indicate that any form of bullying is dealt with rigorously and students generally reported confidence in senior leaders' ability to deal with any conflicting issues. Exclusions have reduced significantly since the previous inspection and attendance is now broadly average. Attendance in the sixth form is also carefully monitored, with any unexpected absences from students, in any year group, investigated. Despite the large distances between classrooms, the vast majority of students arrive punctually to lessons and work well with each other.

The parents and carers who replied to their questionnaire plus the responses from staff and students indicated they all have concerns about the quality of behaviour in the school. Inspectors observed, and students confirmed, that there is some lively behaviour, especially when students move between the buildings, but generally, they socialise together sensibly. However, students regret the lack of facilities in their social areas for them to use at break and lunchtime. Senior leaders are aware of this and are actively considering how to improve the amenities.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has developed a clear structure to drive improvement. Within a short time, he has explained his compelling vision of improvement and is securely developing this. He demonstrates clarity of understanding where weaknesses exist and has implemented, as evident in the self-evaluation document, a clear strategy for how these are to be overcome. Clear lines of accountability have been set up and are understood by senior and middle leaders who have risen to the challenge of improving the school's effectiveness. Comments from middle leaders indicate that they feel trusted and empowered to contribute to school improvement.

Since the previous inspection, improvements linked to the key issues have not been tackled fast enough, especially in relation to improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, whole-school training and coaching for individual teachers, often in conjunction with advisers from the local authority, have only been provided recently. Senior leaders recognise that appropriate systems to monitor the progress of all students are only just being used and understood. Consequently, intervention to support students' progress has been reactive rather than carefully planned to meet the differing needs of individuals; this has led to equality of opportunity being inconsistent throughout the school.

Members of the governing body recognise that changes to systems and procedures were needed. They are now aware, through honest reports and regular dialogue with the headteacher, of current provision throughout the school. Together with senior leaders, they welcome the support and challenge from the local authority and know

that previous targets have not been met. Furthermore, they are increasingly aware that students are not making the progress of which they are capable. Nevertheless, they ensure safeguarding requirements are secure.

Leaders have accurately identified that the curriculum offered to all students is limited. Students in the sixth form study a number of courses mainly at Advanced Supplementary and Advanced Level with some BTEC Level 3 courses also offered. Students complete Key Stage 3 at the end of Year 8 and start their GCSE courses in Year 9. Changes to the courses currently provided are being considered so that the needs of all students can be met more thoroughly. Students' social, moral spiritual and cultural development, and the provision for these through the curriculum, is satisfactory.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 April 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Longcroft School, Beverley, HU17 7EJ

Thank you for talking, both formally and informally, to me and my colleagues when we inspected your school recently. We took note of your comments and opinions, particularly about the lack of social facilities and your concerns about the quality of teaching you receive in different subjects.

We agree that you generally get on well with each other and show sensible behaviour and a sense of self-reliance when moving around the site so that you get to lessons on time. We also agree that, too often, you are not being challenged sufficiently in lessons, because work is too easy, particularly for those of you who are more able. As a result, you become disinterested and do not make the progress of which you are capable. Sixth-form students are more positive about their learning. They are loyal to the school but recognise that they do not choose to take on responsibilities, get involved in activities out of lesson time or mix with younger students at social times. Students who spoke with inspectors are unsure about how well they are doing and how they can improve their grades. However, all were united in saying that they welcome seeing and talking with Mr O'Donnell because, as one of you said: 'he listens to us'.

We have decided that you need to be doing significantly better and have given your school a 'notice to improve'. Your headteacher and other leaders know that things must improve quickly. Inspectors will visit again to check on improvements and to see if you are all making better progress than currently. We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching to accelerate your progress. The school has also been asked to review the curriculum, track your progress very carefully and develop better communication with your parents and carers. I hope you will all help with the changes that are planned, including letting your teachers know if work is too easy and if you do not know how to improve

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.