



# Kirkham Carr Hill 11 to 18 High School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 119744  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280647  
**Inspection dates** 15 November 2005 to 16 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Ruth James

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Royal Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Kirkham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Preston, Lancashire
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 682008
<b>Number on roll</b>	1340	<b>Fax number</b>	01772 673048
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Janice Dickson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John F Davies

---

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 15 November 2005 - 16 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280647
------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Kirkham Carr Hill School is a comprehensive school of above average size for boys and girls aged 11 to 18. It is a Specialist Engineering College. Most of the pupils come from Kirkham and the surrounding areas, which are not disadvantaged. The proportion receiving free school meals is lower than average and the number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. Pupils enter the school with results which are broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils with additional learning needs is low.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is an improving school. In 2005 the proportion of pupils gaining at least five higher general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades increased, following several years when it was about average. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but progress in Key Stage 3 is slower than in Key Stage 4. The headteacher and senior staff pay particular attention to pupils' care and personal development, which are good. The new learning resource centre provides an excellent facility which is particularly well used, and encourages reading and independent study. Engineering College status has enabled the school to improve resources in technology and develop and improve links with other agencies, including a local college. Some teaching is good, but inspectors found it to be satisfactory overall. The behaviour policy has led to an improvement in behaviour. However, the teaching, learning and assessment policy has not been implemented effectively across the whole school and has not had sufficient impact on learning in the classroom. Attendance is good. Key issues for action from the last inspection have been addressed. Pupils are very well cared for. They feel safe and generally enjoy school. The curriculum is good overall and satisfactory in the sixth form. There is a particularly good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Governance is satisfactory and governors take their responsibilities seriously. Inspectors agreed with some of the school's judgements about the quality of provision, but in other areas found the school's view was over optimistic. The improved GCSE results in 2005 clearly demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve. The school provides a satisfactory education and satisfactory value for money.

not applicable

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The school judges the sixth form to be good but inspectors found it to be satisfactory. General certificate of education (GCE) advanced level (A level) results were average in 2004. In 2005 GCE A level results improved. Overall, students make satisfactory progress during their time in the sixth form as a result of satisfactory teaching and learning. Students have mature attitudes to learning and are keen to succeed. They enjoy being in the sixth form and they are well guided and cared for. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Results are not systematically analysed. The sixth form leader has introduced secure systems for monitoring and tracking students' progress and supporting their learning. A reasonable range of advanced subsidiary (AS) level and GCE A level subjects is offered, but there are no courses for less able students. Retention rates have improved and are now satisfactory. Students welcome the good opportunities they are given to run sixth form affairs through the sixth form committee. The sixth form provides satisfactory value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that it is good across all departments.
- Further develop strategies to raise achievement and improve progress to ensure that these are consistent throughout the whole school.
- Improve the systematic monitoring and evaluation of initiatives to ensure they improve quality across the whole school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are average overall. Up to 2004, the percentage of pupils gaining five A\* to C grades in their GCSEs was average for several years. GCSE English results were poor in 2004, particularly for boys. The 2005 results are better. The proportion of pupils achieving five A\* to C grades improved. Many more pupils obtained grade C or above in GCSE English and mathematics. In physical education 98% of pupils gained a grade C or above, and 62% of pupils achieved an A or A\*. Results were good in design and technology, science, French, music, and religious education. In geography and engineering results were unsatisfactory. Girls do better than boys in their GCSEs. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress during their five years of compulsory schooling at Carr Hill, and the 2005 GCSE results are indicative of better progress in the final two years. Standards at Key Stage 3 were above average overall up to 2004. Pupils do not make as much progress as would be expected, especially in English and mathematics. Key Stage 3 results in 2005 were not as good in science as in previous years. Overall, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their progress in reading is good, as a result of paired reading and the alternative curriculum arrangements in Years 7 and 8. In the sixth form GCE A level results were average in 2004. In 2005 the GCE A level results improved. Overall, most pupils now make satisfactory progress in the sixth form.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is developed through well planned experiences in subjects such as English, art, music, and religious education. Assemblies promote the school's positive ethos but do not always include opportunity for reflection. Behaviour is good in the vast majority of lessons and the school is an orderly community. Pupils cooperate well in group work. They enjoy school and are keen to learn. Attendance is good. Pupils make very good use of the excellent facilities in the learning resource centre before school, during breaks and after school, as well as in scheduled lessons. The welcoming environment encourages a positive attitude to reading and independent study and is valued by pupils. Pupils feel secure in school and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. They appreciate the support offered by trained peer counsellors. Participation in physical education and sport is good. There is a range of healthy food.

Pupils have a say in the running of the school through the school council. They raise money for local charities and provide practical support for elderly people. Many Key Stage 4 pupils give support to younger pupils through paired reading. However, few sixth form students are involved with younger pupils. Pupils are well prepared for the future. They develop good basic skills and all Key Stage 4 pupils have work experience.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory overall, with some that is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, but some teaching was sound rather than inspirational, with few teachers prepared to be adventurous in seeking to challenge and enthuse their pupils. At its best, teaching is characterised by teachers' high expectations, strong subject knowledge, and skilful planning which matches work well to pupils' abilities and needs, enabling good learning to take place. Pupils enjoy these lessons and rapidly gain new knowledge and skills, especially when they are clear about what it is they are learning and why. Pupils enjoy lessons where they are actively engaged in varied and stimulating activities, but not those where they are largely passive during lengthy teacher explanations. In less effective, though satisfactory, lessons the pace is slower, and work set is less suited to pupils' varying ability levels. Relationships are strong across the school, and good pupil management is supported effectively by the school's recent behaviour management policy. The well conceived policy for teaching, learning and assessment has not yet had enough impact on the quality of learning in lessons. There is insufficient identification and sharing of good practice across the whole school. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are not rigorous enough to ensure consistent practice between, and within, subjects. The quality of marking and the use of assessment to set targets, plan lessons and check on progress are uneven. Better use is beginning to be made of the considerable amount of data available to track pupils' progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school that the quality of the curriculum is good. In Years 7 to 9 pupils get a broad and balanced experience that includes good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision in Years 10 and 11 includes a good range of GCSE courses together with some vocational and work-related opportunities. In keeping with the school's specialist status all pupils study at least one design and technology course, and a GCSE course in engineering is also offered. Other successful features are the alternative courses to GCSE that provide more appropriate experiences for a growing number of pupils, including some who struggle with a full GCSE programme. Effective collaboration with a local college is supporting

this initiative. Pupils are well prepared for future employment or further education through good quality work experience and careers advice. Most pupils find courses that interest them and suit their needs and ambitions. The marked reduction in the number of pupils who leave school without qualifications is indicative of the impact of this work. The personal development programme ensures that health and safety education is good, and the effective citizenship curriculum makes learners aware of their rights and responsibilities, and gives them good opportunities to participate fully in the life of the school. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided, notably in sport and performing arts, and these are well supported and enjoyed by both boys and girls. In the sixth form a reasonable range of AS level and GCE A level subjects is offered, but there are no full time courses for less able students. All statutory requirements for the curriculum are met.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, personal support and guidance for pupils based on mutual trusting relationships. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust. The school works effectively with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met, especially those deemed to be vulnerable. The majority of parents are pleased with the work of the school. A small minority have concerns about pupils' behaviour or feel pupils' and parents' views are not listened to enough. The newly developed 'Achievement Centre' provides high quality support helping pupils to manage their behaviour. Their return to everyday lessons is very well planned. Pupils' academic progress is tracked closely. Pupils achieving well in Key Stage 4 are encouraged through letters to parents. Pupils likely to underachieve are identified and support is provided by subject staff. In Key Stage 3, strategies to identify underachievement and provide additional support are improving, but have not yet had sufficient impact. Pupils receive well planned careers guidance at all stages. In Year 9 the arrangements for pupils to make their Key Stage 4 option choices are comprehensive. Good information is provided about post-16 options, including the school sixth form and opportunities at a local college. Sixth form pupils are supported well in their applications to university.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some considerable strengths. The headteacher provides strong, positive leadership and is well supported by other senior leaders in seeking to provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment. The clear strengths in pupils' personal development, in the curriculum and in care, guidance and support are testimony to their success. Effective action was taken to improve GCSE results in 2005. Staffing issues, which contributed to the 2004 results being below school expectations, have been addressed. Coursework and revision strategies were also put in place. The impact of these can be seen in the improved 2005 results. For example, in English language the proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades increased from 44% in 2004 to 65% in 2005. Results in many other subjects, including

mathematics, also improved. In 2005 the percentage of pupils gaining at least five A\*-C grades including both English and mathematics improved to 53%, from 34% in 2004. This success in improving GCSE results clearly demonstrates that the school has the capacity to improve. Specialist status as an engineering college has led to improvements in resources and accommodation, but not all the relevant targets have been met. Strategies such as the behaviour policy, and the teaching, learning and assessment policy have been put in place with some success. However, middle managers are not held to account for their consistent application, nor are they supported by robust systems to monitor and evaluate their impact on standards. Planning does not always have a sufficient focus on improving teaching and learning as a means to raise standards. The school does not do enough to identify and share good practice in teaching and learning. The move to a new system of departmental self-evaluation indicates that the school acknowledges the need to address inconsistencies in teaching if standards are to be raised further. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are committed and supportive but do not do enough to hold the school to account for the standards achieved. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 0207 421 6800  
F 0207 421 6707  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Kirkham Carr Hill High School  
Royal Avenue  
Kirkham  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR4 2ST

16 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed visiting Kirkham Carr Hill School. We were able to visit lessons and to talk to a number of you and to the staff. We also looked at the results of questionnaires sent in by your parents. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school. Overall, we are satisfied with the education your school provides.

The school's results have improved. For a while your school's results were around average. In 2005, the GCSE results were much better. More pupils got at least five higher grade GCSEs including English and mathematics. The GCE A level results also improved, but not as much. We are satisfied with the progress you are making.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and some of it is good. You have a good choice of courses at Key Stage 4, including GCSEs and vocational courses. Some of you have the opportunity to attend a local college. There is a reasonable choice of AS level and GCE A level subjects in the sixth form. The school provides a good range of interesting activities for you.

The school cares for you well. You told us that you feel safe at school and that bullying incidents are dealt with. Older pupils said they had seen an improvement in behaviour. The Achievement Centre particularly helps some of you who find school difficult. You receive good advice and information about your options in Year 9, and about opportunities after GCSEs. Those of you in the sixth form are well supported in applying to university.

Your headteacher knows what he wants to do. He has worked hard with his staff to make sure that GCSE results improve and that you know what he expects in terms of behaviour. The most important thing the school has to do now is to keep up the standards and to make the teaching even better. We feel confident your headteacher and staff can do this and we know you are willing to put in the hard work. We wish you every success for the future in all that you do.

Mrs R James, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools

Annex B