



# Driffield School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 118078  
**Local Authority** East Riding of Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 291014  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Judith Straw

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Manorfield Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Driffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		YO25 5HR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01377 253631
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1950	<b>Fax number</b>	01377 256922
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	300		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graham Storey
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Martin Green
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–18	12–13 October 2006	291014

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Driffield is a much larger than average secondary school in a rural area. Fewer students than average are identified as having specific learning difficulties or disabilities, speak English as a second language or are entitled to free school meals. Almost all students are of White British origin. The attainment of students when they join is average. The school very recently gained specialist status for mathematics and computing. The school is also part of an extended services cluster, with the co-ordinator for 16 schools being based at Driffield.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Driffield School is a vibrant community where teachers and students work hard and achieve well. In this increasingly effective school, standards are rising and have been consistently above average for the last 3 years. Most parents praise the school and are very happy with the teaching and care their children receive. They speak well of the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff. They appreciate the way in which students are welcomed into the school and given the chance to reach their full potential. The students themselves say that they enjoy the huge range of opportunities open to them and feel well cared for even though the size of the school can be daunting for some. The personal development and well-being of students is good. They are confident, articulate and enthusiastic. Students of all ages mix well together because of the tutor system, which puts students of different ages in mixed tutor groups. Sixth form students play an important role helping younger students to enjoy and take full part in the life of the school.

Students praise the teaching as being very 'hands on' – 'teachers don't just tell you, you think and plan for yourself.' Teaching and learning are therefore good with some that is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what students can do and make these clear. Standards at the end of Year 9 and in Year 11 are above average, showing students to be making good progress in both key stages. The curriculum is satisfactory. Students are able to choose from a wide range of GCSE courses that link well with the school's sixth form provision. However, there are not enough courses for those students who are not well suited to, or see little relevance in, a full GCSE programme. Provision for key skills is good with students achieving well above average in English and mathematics. The recently acquired specialist status for mathematics and computing is enhancing provision for key skills further.

Driffield takes good care of its students. A small minority of parents are concerned about behaviour from a small number of students and occasional bullying incidents. The school is well aware of these concerns and has effective systems in place to eliminate any poor behaviour and bullying. The recently re-organised student services team is an impressive development in managing the support and care of students in need of help. As yet, however, the school's system for monitoring the educational progress and personal development of all students is too fragmented. It is not clear which staff have a complete overview of each student's progress and achievement.

Leadership and management are good. Senior and middle leaders, under the clear direction of the headteacher, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a shared sense of purpose. The evidence of their continuing success is seen in rising standards as students work hard to reach increasingly challenging targets and in the growing popularity of the school. Good links with local schools and the local community, for work experience, broaden the range of opportunities open to students and learners. The school works very effectively within the Extended Schools Cluster sharing expertise and good practice. Governance is good. The school's financial management is sound and it provides good value for money. All the issues raised at the last inspection have been dealt with and the capacity to improve further is good.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a very successful sixth form. In 2006, results for AS, A2 and AVCE examinations were well above average, maintaining the consistently positive trend since the last inspection. Given their attainment on entry to the sixth form, students overall achievement and progress are very good; many achieve well beyond expectation. Teaching is lively and challenging, and fosters students' responsibility and independent learning and results in very positive attitudes. Systems for checking on students' progress are strong. Students enjoy being in the sixth form and say they are very well supported academically and personally. Most feel that the rigorous checks on their progress and attendance are fair and in their best interests. Students' personal development is excellent and is nurtured by a vigorous tutorial programme. Students enthusiastically participate in the many opportunities to enrich their studies, notably by helping younger students in the school, or by acting as subject or house ambassadors. They feel strongly that their views matter to the school.

The sixth form is very well led and managed. There is a sharp focus on improving teaching and learning where needed. The sixth form is growing and developing with more than half of Year 11 students continuing into Year 12. A flexible entry policy encourages Year 11 students to continue their education into the sixth form. They are able to choose from a wide range of academic A level courses together with a few vocational qualifications. Although most students complete the two year course, a number leave at the end of Year 12. The school acknowledges the need to review the range and level of its sixth form provision, and is seeking to introduce new courses to better meet the needs of its growing numbers.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Broaden the curriculum in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form to provide courses for a wider range of students.
- Strengthen the links between pastoral and academic tutors to improve the systems for checking students' progress, identifying underachievement at the earliest stage and taking remedial action.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards are above average and achievement is good. In Key Stage 3, students enter with average standards and make good progress over three years so that they achieve above the national average in tests by Year 9. The achievement of students has steadily improved over the last five years. Students do particularly well in mathematics, reaching well beyond expectations and demonstrating very good progress and achievement. Results in 2006 show that standards and achievement continue to rise.

In Years 10 and 11, GCSE students continue to make good progress and achieve above average results in GCSE examinations. The percentage of students gaining 5 or more A\*- C grades including English and mathematics is well above average. In 2006, all students achieved at least one A\*- G pass. Students are performing better than might be expected in many subjects, the most impressive results being seen in mathematics and textiles where achievement is outstanding. Only in history have standards of attainment not risen at the same rate as other subjects. Overall the performance of students in 2005 put them in the top 12% of schools for achievement. The percentage of 5 or more A\*- C passes fell slightly in 2006 but is still above average, and still well above for English and mathematics.

Girls are performing better in English but boys are outperforming girls in mathematics and science by a small margin. The gender gap is closing as the school's strategies have a positive impact. Students with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the very good support they receive. Only students with statements of special educational need failed to meet their targets in 2005.

Standards are high in the sixth form and the achievement of students is very good, particularly in Year 13 where the pass rate for A levels is consistently well above average. The achievement of some students is outstanding.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The personal development of students is good. Their attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is well below national figures. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is generally good. However, a minority of parents and a small proportion of the students interviewed expressed some concern over the conduct of a small minority of students. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies, tutor group times and many lessons handle important issues sensitively and encourage reflection. Students acquire multi-cultural awareness, despite the area's relative geographic isolation, through some aspects of the curriculum. This is enhanced by a link with a theatre group from Malawi.

Students express very positive views of the house tutor system in the way they can mix with fellow students of different ages and develop friendly relations. This contributes well to their enjoyment of school, and increases the feeling of safety among younger students. Students, including those in the sixth form, participate in an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, aided by late transport home. They listen to the good advice they receive about the importance of living healthy lifestyles. They also have a wealth of opportunity to take on responsibilities, contributing to the life of the school. The school executive council is influential in effecting changes and contributing to new school policies. Students from all years have received training as anti-bullying mentors, and most students feel free from bullying. Acquisition of higher computing skills, as a result of the specialist status of the school, together with the key skills of literacy and numeracy prepares students well for the world of work.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall, with a high proportion of outstanding lessons. A well conceived teaching and learning policy sets out clearly the ingredients of successful lessons and gives teachers ample guidance in how to incorporate them in planning. Consequently, most lessons are conducted at a good pace, with varied activities to stretch students of all abilities. Learning is both effective and enjoyable because students understand clearly what they are doing, how it builds on what they have done before and what standards they are expected to reach. There are many opportunities for students to take part in activities such as discussion, performance or independent research which promote motivation and engagement. Indeed, their positive attitudes, willingness to learn and the good relationships they form with teaching and support staff are important factors in their good achievement. Some lessons still lack pace and challenge and are too teacher directed, with students passive for too long. In this small number of lessons, work is not closely matched to the needs of individual students. Consequently, progress is slower and the quality of learning reduced. Marking is inconsistent in informing students of the standards they have reached and what they need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum overall is satisfactory. For students of average ability and above, the curriculum is good. For students who would succeed with more vocational pathways, there is at present a shortage of quality opportunities. The school is aware of the need to provide quality vocational pathways in Years 10 and 11 and in the 6th form. Some new courses are in place, notably the ASDAN course and a foundation course in caring for children. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is taught in Years 7 to 9; in Years 10 and 11 PSHE and citizenship are provided mainly through the religious studies examination. In the sixth form, there is no religious education as legally required.

An excellent range of after school activities is provided and extra effort is placed on encouraging students from the local villages to attend by providing late buses two nights each week. These buses are generally well used.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Care, guidance and support are good. The school's commitment to the care and well-being of students is evident in exemplary arrangements for child protection, safeguarding and health and safety matters. Reorganisation of the student services team has enabled a better integration of all aspects of care and support from an impressive range of in-school and external agencies. Students say they feel safe and that they can go to an adult in confidence for help and advice. The Learning Support Base provides well for vulnerable students and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Effective links with parents are maintained through questionnaires, newsletters, written reports and parents' evenings. Good links with primary schools and effective transition arrangements enable Year 7 students to settle in quickly. Students in Years 10 and 11 appreciate the good quality support and guidance they receive in making option and career choices. However, there is a lack of coherence in the procedures for the overall monitoring of students' academic and personal progress. The school acknowledges this weakness and is in the process of implementing a sophisticated computer-based system to keep all students better informed about their progress and identify those who are not performing as well as expected.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis and students achieve well. Most enjoy their education and respond well to the school's sense of purpose and challenge. The acquisition of specialist college status for mathematics and computing has provided enhanced levels of equipment and staffing, and has raised expectations and academic targets further.

The relatively recently appointed headteacher and reconstituted senior team have put the quality of lessons and students' achievement at the heart of the school's continuing development. Success in both of these areas is evident in the good quality of teaching that the school provides and in the improving standards in national tests and examinations. The senior team has recognised the school's many strong features and has successfully built upon them with better systems and procedures. They are increasingly, and relatively quickly, winning the hearts and minds of the staff in gaining acceptance that changes are necessary if the school is to provide a higher quality of education for its students. The headteacher has taken some difficult staffing decisions to maintain the pace of change and improvement but morale is good and a strong common sense of purpose prevails.

A productive and effective partnership between governors and staff provides the school with plenty of support, and challenge when necessary. Governors monitor the

work of the school well. However, statutory requirements are not fully met in relation to corporate worship or religious education in the sixth form.

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## 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>
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### 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>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	1
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>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	1

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

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

Driffield School  
Manorfield Road  
Driffield  
YO25 5HR

16 October 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school last week. Thank you especially to the many of you who gave up time to talk to us about your views about school and to share your experiences. You are obviously proud of your school and its many achievements.

The inspection found yours to be a good school and a very good sixth form. Results in Year 9 are good, particularly in mathematics. GCSE results are good and again especially so in English, mathematics and textiles where many of you are achieving really well. 'A' level results are very good indeed and you can be really proud of your achievements. You are making good progress because of your own positive attitudes and the good teaching that you receive. You generally behave well. A few of your parents said that there is bad behaviour on school buses. This spoils the end of the day for everyone. You obviously approve of the vertical tutor groups and said that you enjoy mixing with other students of different ages. The school takes good care of you and ensures that you are safe and healthy. You have a good range of subjects to choose from and excellent extra-curricular opportunities which you obviously enjoy. The teachers and senior staff are doing a good job in working hard to make the school even better. You can help in this by ensuring that behaviour is good at all times.

The school agrees with us that there are some things that can be improved.

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Firstly, it would help if there was a better range of vocational subjects for you to choose at GCSE and in the sixth form.

Secondly, we think that the school needs to improve its methods of keeping track of your progress in every subject, as well as your personal development, so that it will know more quickly if you are having any problems and not achieving as well as you could.

We are confident that you and your teachers will continue to work together for a better school. Our best wishes to you for your future.

Judith Straw  
(Lead inspector)