

John Flamsteed Community School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112948
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	395587
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2012
Lead inspector	Sue Harrison 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	606
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Sibson
Headteacher	Daniel Holden
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2009
School address	Derby Road Denby Ripley DE5 8NP
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sue Harrison	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sally-Ann Harding	Additional Inspector
Jo Curd	Additional Inspector
Raymond Lau	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 32 lessons, as well as a range of project activities that took place on the first day of the inspection. They scrutinised students' books and looked at school documentation that included self evaluation and development plans, and data on the attainment and progress of the current cohort of students. Inspectors held meetings with groups of staff, students and governors and analysed 244 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and students.

Information about the school

John Flamsteed is smaller than most secondary schools. The school serves a semi-rural community of villages; it is over-subscribed and recruits approximately half of its intake from outside its local area. The great majority of students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is almost double the national average. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Its inclusive and caring ethos strives to bring out the best in every student and students achieve well in most subjects. It is not yet outstanding because in a few subjects achievement is less strong.
- Attainment has risen steadily since the last inspection and is now above the national average. Students make consistently good progress in mathematics and generally good progress in English. They also make good progress in most, but not all, other subjects. Students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs achieve well. Students make good progress in developing a range of wider skills.
- Teaching and learning are good in a high proportion of lessons, and there is an increasingly effective focus on developing students' numeracy and literacy skills across all subjects. However, teaching does not always cater well enough for all students in mixed-ability classes. The use of assessment to support learning is not consistently good and the quality of marking is variable.
- The school provides a very safe and supportive learning environment. Students behave well around the school and, in the large majority of lessons, they display a positive attitude to learning. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is slowed by a small minority of students not paying attention and distracting others.
- The school is well led and managed. It provides a good curriculum, with particular strengths around the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The quality of teaching is monitored effectively. Self-evaluation is used well to identify areas for further improvement. Links with parents and carers are strong. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted survey are very positive about the quality of education provided by the school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order for students make good progress in all subjects, the school needs to:
 - ensure that all teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of students in mixed-ability classes by providing resource materials matched to students' different needs and learning activities that help students to learn at a pace appropriate to their individual level
 - spread the good practice that exists in the school so that all teachers use assessment strategies effectively to support learning in the classroom, mark work regularly and give students sufficient feedback on what they are doing well and how to improve further.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

A high proportion of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted survey feel their children make good progress at the school. Inspectors found students make good progress in the majority of lessons. In mathematics, they gain confidence in understanding key concepts, which enables them to apply their knowledge well in solving problems. In English, they are able to analyse effectively how language is used in different kinds of texts and other media. Progress in science lessons is more mixed; in some, students are able to make clear deductions from practical work and link this well to theory, but in others their knowledge and understanding is more limited. Students show good development of practical skills in subjects like design and technology and performing arts. In humanities lessons, they are able to apply their knowledge well to help them understand current global issues.

Levels of attainment in the school are rising and are above the national average. Students enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment and make good progress in most subjects. Progress is consistently good in mathematics. In English, it has been more variable, and in 2011 the progress of boys of middle ability was not as good as other groups. Evidence for the current year shows that action to address this has been successful. School data show improvement and inspectors' evidence from observing English lessons and looking at books confirmed this. Progress in science was satisfactory overall in 2011 and good for some students, particularly the most able. School data, which includes units of examinations that have already been achieved, shows an increase in achievement for the current Year 11. However, inspectors found progress in science classes and in students' books continues to be variable.

Students develop a good range of skills to help them when they leave school. In class and in project work, they demonstrate effective teamwork and the ability to

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research information. They successfully develop their numeracy and literacy skills across a range of subjects and topics. For example, a Year 9 enterprise project culminated in group presentations that showed good skills in literacy and information and communication technology. Many students read their presentations with confidence and teams created a good standard of multi-media advertisements such as web pages, video and radio advertisements to promote the product they had created.

The school has successfully narrowed the gap in achievement that existed between boys and girls, with significant improvement in boys' achievement in the current Year 11. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well as a result of good quality support in classes and additional support outside of lessons. Students who are eligible for free school meals achieve better than is generally found nationally.

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence concurs with the views of a large majority of parents and carers that the quality of teaching is good, with some outstanding teaching in lessons and a few where it is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm for their subject ensures students are well motivated to learn in most lessons. Teachers choose resources well to engage students' interest. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson on spreadsheets, students made calculations about the use of mobile phones and times of buses. This use of relevant examples helped students to see the value of their learning and how it can be used in everyday life. Practical work is used well across a range of subjects to help students understand concepts. Year 7 enjoyed the project on making and launching a rocket that focused on developing their mathematical and scientific skills.

Students are encouraged to think carefully about their work and to let teachers know if they do not understand it. As a result, in many lessons students are confident to participate and keen to extend their knowledge. For example in a language lesson on comprehension, they developed their vocabulary significantly by asking supplementary questions. Through formal lessons, projects and enrichment activities, the school is very effective at getting young people to reflect on moral questions, and deepen their understanding of other communities and global issues. Examples include work on environmental projects, and learning about different cultural groups in Derby.

Although teachers use a range of interesting resources and methods, they do not always adapt them sufficiently to meet different needs in the group, especially in mixed-ability classes. Inspectors saw lessons where all students were set the same task; some finished early and were not given extension work and others failed to complete the task. The effective deployment and work of teaching assistants contributes significantly to the generally high level of achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs. The school has introduced a greater focus on developing literacy and numeracy across all subjects and inspectors

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saw good examples of this in several lessons.

The use of assessment strategies to support learning is not yet used effectively across the school. Inspectors saw some excellent examples of teachers using initial assessment to gauge students' starting points, and regular assessment during the lesson to check understanding. However, this is not the case in all lessons and there is limited use of self and peer assessment in some lessons. Marking of students' work is also inconsistent. Some books are marked regularly and contain detailed comments to help students, but others have not been marked for some time or do not contain sufficient guidance to help students see what they are doing well and how they can improve further.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school provides a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning. Students are well behaved around the school and in most lessons. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality to lessons is good. Learning is slowed down in a small number of lessons where one or two students misbehave. This was identified by parents and carers, as well as during the inspection. However, parents, carers and students are generally very positive about behaviour in the school and the overwhelming response from parents and carers was that their children are safe at the school.

Students are polite and respectful of others. They are clear about right and wrong. The school sets a high standard of expectations for behaviour; students are clear about this and appreciate the consistency with which sanctions are implemented. The introduction of a nurture room this year has been successful at providing extra support for young people with a range of additional needs, some of which affect their behaviour. This has contributed to the decreasing number of fixed term exclusions, which was slightly above average in the previous year.

The school works effectively with students to promote their awareness of bullying. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and are encouraged to report any concerns they have. Records of bullying incidents show the school takes appropriate measures in response to reported incidents and a large majority of parents, carers and students are satisfied with action taken.

Leadership and management

The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders set increasingly challenging targets in terms of students' achievements and this has been successful as a means of increasing attainment. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning is followed up by appropriate professional development to bring about further improvement. This has been effective in driving up the standard of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is robust, for example the school is aware of the need to carry out more training for staff on assessment and marking.

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The governing body provides a good level of support and challenge for the school. The quality of information provided to its members to help them monitor students' achievements has improved in recent years and is now good. They know the school well and have regular communication with staff and students as well as senior managers. Training for middle managers has increased their effectiveness at analysing data on students' achievements in order to identify potential issues as early as possible and put in place actions to address them.

The curriculum is good and is effective at ensuring students move on to appropriate further education or training when they leave school. At Key Stage 4, a large majority of students take GCSE qualifications in their optional as well as core subjects. Where appropriate, students benefit from attending the local college to undertake vocational qualifications. Project days, enrichment activities and links with other countries and the local community all contribute well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Safeguarding procedures meet legal requirements. The school has a strong commitment to promoting equality, for example parents and carers of disabled students and those who have special educational needs are very positive about the inclusive nature of the school. Links with parents and carers are good. A large majority feel the school is well led and would recommend it to others.

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of John Flamsteed Community School, Ripley, DE5 8NP

I am writing to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection of your school. Thank you for helping us to find our way around, and for giving us your views.

We agree with what most of you told us that this is a good school. We found that you work hard and make good progress in most lessons, and that teachers are skilful at making many lessons interesting and enjoyable. It was good to see that examination results are getting better each year, although there are a small number of subjects where you could achieve more. We saw that you develop a wide range of skills that help you to move on successfully when you leave school. We were particularly impressed by the research and presentation skills you showed during project day. Behaviour at the school is good. We found students to be polite and respectful of others. Learning is slower in a few lessons where a small number of students do not listen or distract others. We agree with what many of your parents and carers told us that the school is well led and managed. In order to continue to improve it further, we have asked the headteacher to:

- help you make good progress in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - learning materials and activities suit the needs of students at different levels
 - teachers assess your understanding and progress effectively in all lessons, mark your books regularly and explain clearly what you need to do to improve further.

You can help with this by trying your best in all lessons and making sure you complete work in your books.

Yours sincerely

Sue Harrison
Her Majesty's Inspector

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