

Beverley Grammar School: with specialisms in Engineering and Cognition and Learning

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118116
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	326768
Inspection dates	25 September 2008
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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School (total)	842
Sixth form	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Christopher Bodsworth
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Goodwin
Date of previous school inspection	June 2006
School address	Queensgate Beverley HU17 8NF
Telephone number	01482 881531
Fax number	01482 881564

Age group	11–19
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues; the progress of students, personal development and well-being, curriculum provision, care, guidance and support and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, the school's own assessment records, the minutes of meetings, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff and students, and the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Founded in 700 AD by St John of Beverley the school is smaller than the average secondary school. It is oversubscribed and students come to the school from the local town and villages surrounding Beverley. Students are predominantly of White British heritage with small numbers of students from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. There are very few students for whom English is not their first language. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is low. Over a quarter of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has had specialist status in Engineering since 2004 and second specialisms in cognition and learning since April 2008. It has a joint sixth form with the local girls' school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Beverley Grammar is an outstanding school and provides a high quality of care and education for its students. The vast majority of parents in the questionnaire are supportive of the school and share this view. One student spoke for many when he commented on the best features of the school: 'Everyone knows each other, it is friendly, makes you feel welcome and that you belong.' Under the leadership of the new headteacher the school has continued to flourish, rising to the challenge of modifying its curriculum to better meet the needs and interests of students whilst maintaining the excellent quality of its work to support, guide and care for them. These outstanding aspects of the school's work make a significant contribution to students' achievement.

The school evaluates achievement as good. This inspection focused on the progress of learners and found that actions to tackle underperformance are leading to a notable improvement. Most students join the school with average levels of attainment and a significant proportion with above average attainment. The combination of very good induction procedures and good teaching helps students to get off to a promising start. They make good progress from their starting points to achieve challenging targets by the end of Year 9. Students' high achievement in Years 7 to 9 has not always been matched in Years 10 and 11. However, close tracking and monitoring of students' progress, mentoring and the introduction of new courses better suited to students' learning styles has successfully addressed this issue. Students make good progress to meet challenging targets, particularly in the school's specialist subjects of science, engineering, mathematics and English. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable students make very good progress. Standards are above average and have improved since the previous inspection. Results in 2008 examinations were the highest in the school's history and every student achieved five or more GCSEs.

Students thoroughly enjoy being at school and this is well demonstrated in their consistently high attendance. The school is a calm and well ordered environment in which students' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are excellent. A culture of mutual respect between staff and students is firmly established. This is highly valued by parents and students and provides a firm foundation for students' excellent personal development. A parent commented; 'My son feels he can go to his form tutor about anything.' Students are caring and keen to support others; they collaborate and work together well and regularly raise large amounts for charity. However, the current opportunities for students in Years 7 to 11 to undertake specific roles within their school community are limited. Programmes, known throughout the school as SPACE, make a significant contribution to students' well-being and support their personal, social, health and emotional development. Students say that lessons are 'Interesting and exciting' and comment that 'Other subjects do not cover these things.' Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding; they are enthusiastic in learning about other cultures and religious practices in response to a rich and stimulating programme of visits and cross-curricular work. Students value the opportunities the SPACE programme provides to promote their independence and confidence, understand their social responsibility, and learn about good citizenship. They are encouraged to think for

themselves and explain their ideas to others. They say, 'We are treated as individuals, whatever view you have is OK, our views are respected.'

The school evaluates the quality of teaching and learning as good. Rigorous procedures underpin this judgement and this aspect was not inspected in depth during the inspection. High achievement of able students and those with learning difficulties supports the school's evaluation that their individual learning needs are being met effectively. The quality of the curriculum is outstanding because it is responsive to students' needs. The wider range of courses, qualifications and learning methods now offered have a positive and significant impact on students' progress and enjoyment. Students speak very positively about the new courses and breadth of extra-curricular and enrichment activities: they find them intellectually challenging and appreciate the efforts teachers make to ensure learning is active and interesting. The introduction of food technology in Years 7-9 has contributed significantly to pupils' knowledge of balanced diets, enabling them to make healthy choices, cook meals and gain important life skills. Together with more opportunities to participate in sports, students are making good progress in adopting healthy lifestyles. Systems exist within the school to monitor students' progress in more detail. The school has excellent partnerships with other institutions and the business community through its specialist status in engineering and are developing specialisms in cognition and learning. Such partnerships contribute significantly to promoting curriculum relevance and community cohesion.

Leadership and management throughout the school are outstanding. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what can be improved. Their aims for the school to be friendly, open, caring and successful are shared by staff, parents, students and governors. Rigorous processes are in place to support self-evaluation, planning for school improvement and the continuing professional development of staff. Governors are supportive, attend meetings regularly and are well informed about the school's work. They demonstrate effective financial management and take difficult decisions. Their involvement in self-evaluation and monitoring of policies is not as firmly established. Safeguarding arrangements are firmly in place and meet current requirements. The school has used its resources well to co-ordinate and improve support for learning. Specialist support has increased since the last inspection to meet the growing and diverse range of students' needs. Students' learning and social needs continue to be met effectively and support for students entering the school and for those moving onto the next stage of their education is very good. A wide range of intervention and support programmes contribute significantly to the outstanding achievement of the most vulnerable learners including students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school provides exceptional value for money and has an excellent capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Sixth form provision is outstanding. An improving trend of above average attainment, achievement and high retention rates has been maintained since the last inspection. Re-organised since the last inspection, the sixth form is very well managed and improvements in the co-ordination of learning, regular tutorials and close monitoring ensure almost all students achieve their targets. Partnerships with schools, colleges

and universities and the good management of these links enable the school to meet the interests, needs and aspirations of current students. A planned programme to implement new courses and qualifications demonstrates a firm grasp of what steps to take to improve further.

Students' personal development and well-being are excellent and their attendance is high. Students enjoy being in the sixth form and play a full part in the school community and beyond. For example, they successfully support younger students with reading, helping many to make progress.

The quality of teaching and learning is good; students value teachers' specialist expertise, support for learning and readiness to explain complex points effectively. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Students are confident in the high quality of services and in the staff providing them. Students are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning and the school takes every opportunity to support them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the range of opportunities so that students in Years 7 to 11 may contribute more fully to their school community.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16–19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	NA	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	1	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	1	

¹Grade 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.

The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
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	

26 September 2008



Dear Students

Inspection of Beverley Grammar School: with specialisms in Engineering and Cognition and Learning, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17 8NF

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection. I enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. My findings are as follows; your school is outstanding. You work hard to make it so, achieving high standards and making good progress in your work. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who have overcome problems make outstanding progress.

Your school is welcoming and friendly. Students and staff treat each other with respect. Many of you said that everyone connected with the school wants you to do your best and helps you to do so. A lot of the people I met think this is one the best things about the school. You told me how much you appreciated the help, advice and support you receive from staff when you have difficulties. I agree that the care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding and the extra help accelerates your progress.

- The curriculum is outstanding and teaching and learning are good. Those of you who have studied the latest courses told me how much you enjoyed the challenge and how teachers helped you to learn more effectively by teaching in practical ways. I saw some of this too in lessons. I was pleased to see you taking responsibility for your health and acting safely. I was impressed by your exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school and your very good attitudes to learning.
- Many of you told me about the SPACE programme. It looks interesting and fun and makes a big contribution to your outstanding personal development and well-being. The leadership and management are outstanding and have a very clear idea of what to do to improve the school further. You are consulted regularly about your views, and are rightly proud of your school.
- The school has excellent partnerships with other institutions and the business community through its specialist status in engineering and the latest ones in cognition and learning that they are developing.

There is one improvement that I have asked senior staff to make;

- Provide more opportunities to enable students in Years 7 to 11 to contribute more fully to their school community.

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector