

Tibshelf School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112949
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357231
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Elaine Taylor 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	950
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Beckingham
Headteacher	Peter Crowe
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. 35 lessons and 38 teachers were observed, plus some shorter visits to lessons. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, staff and the school improvement partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, development plans, minutes of meetings, records of monitoring activities, students' work and teachers' marking in books. They also scrutinised 42 staff questionnaires, 152 from students and 77 from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- How well boys achieve and the achievement of all students in English.
- How well teachers are using assessment in order to fine-tune their teaching to the needs of individual pupils.
- How well the curriculum meets individual student's needs.
- The consistency in quality across all levels of leadership to determine the capacity of the school to continue to improve in uncertain and challenging circumstances.

Information about the school

Tibshelf School is an average sized specialist sports college serving 9 villages. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds and there is a greater proportion of boys than found nationally. The number of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average but rising. The proportion of children who are looked after by the local authority is the highest in the local area. Since 2008 Tibshelf School has been leading and supporting Deincourt School which closed in August 2010. In September 2010 the two schools became one split site school with the principal site in Tibshelf and the annex in North Wingfield, some 6 miles away. In 2006 it was included in the Building Schools for the Future programme. Plans for a new school reached completion in July 2010, but are currently on hold. The school has received several awards including the International School Award, the International Inspirations Programme and the Anti-bullying Excellence Award, and it won the 2009 Outstanding Contribution to Raising Awareness of Global Issues award from Giving Nations.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Tibshelf School provides a good education. Students enjoy being there and achieve well. Standards continue to rise and are above average. The school sets and meets challenging whole school and individual targets. In lessons and over time students make good progress because they receive good teaching and have a curriculum which is carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. There is a strongly inclusive ethos where students have positive relationships with adults and with each other. The outcomes for young people whose circumstances have made them vulnerable are good and the relatively high proportion of students who are looked after achieve well. The gap between the achievement of boys and girls is closing quickly and in 2010 all students left with a qualification. The positive attitude to learning which the school fosters and the effective advice given on future options mean that there is a much lower than average proportion who are not in education or employment with training after leaving.

All aspects of the students' personal development are at least good. The contribution they make to the school and wider community is excellent because of the leadership skills they develop and use in local primary schools and the projects they undertake with communities overseas. Attendance for the majority of students is above average, but there is a group of students at the North Wingfield site whose persistent absence is too high. Behaviour is good and makes a significant contribution to learning in lessons. The impact of the school's sports specialism is seen in the very good understanding the students have of the importance of physical fitness. Large numbers take part in regular physical activity and work done through the School Sports Partnership provides additional opportunities and benefits both the school and the local communities. Students have a weaker appreciation of the need to eat healthily and do not take full advantage of the healthy food on offer.

Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good, demonstrating the good leadership and strong commitment of all staff during a very difficult period. Staff continue to give generously of their time to ensure the large range of clubs, visits and extra-curricular activities continues. Teachers use assessment well to plan different levels of learning objectives for their lessons. However, teachers do not always use questioning effectively in their lessons to gauge how well students are progressing and adjust their teaching accordingly. There is good support and care for all students and the school tracks the progress of individuals and groups in order to ensure none fall behind.

Leaders have been highly effective in managing the difficult circumstances the school is in. The fabric of the building on the Tibshelf site poses significant challenges. However, within the severe financial constraints posed by running two widely spaced sites, leaders have managed to ensure students are safe and well educated. Students contribute by treating the buildings and surroundings with respect. The excellent use of partnerships significantly

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adds to the value of the provision, especially evident in aspects of the students' personal development. Work as an extended school contributes well to community cohesion and the specialist status makes a positive contribution to provision and outcomes. Parents are positive about the school. Leaders gather a wide range of evidence to evaluate the school and their conclusions are accurate. These lead to good development plans that are monitored and adjusted regularly. The school has good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate students' progress in lessons by expanding the range of questioning techniques which teachers use in order to allow them to finely tune their teaching to meet students' different needs as the lesson proceeds.
- Strengthen students' understanding of the need for a healthy diet so that more of them make better choices from the healthy options on offer.
- Significantly reduce the persistent absence on the North Wingfield site.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Progress from broadly average starting points is good. Standards have been rising consistently and in 2010 were above average in the majority of indicators. The school met its challenging targets. Standards in mathematics are well above average and in English have risen from significantly below average to just below in 2010, despite staffing difficulties. Progress in lessons is good and convincing evidence was provided for inspectors that the pattern of improvement is continuing this year. Particularly impressive is the rise in standards at the North Wingfield site. Students acquire skills and knowledge at a good rate in lessons and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are able to work independently when given the opportunity and enjoy their time at school. The achievement of students who join the school after experiencing disruption to their education is good. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals make the same good progress as other groups.

Students report that they feel safe and their behaviour in the cramped conditions at the Tibshelf site is careful and considerate. The attitudes and behaviour of the smaller group of students on the North Wingfield site are sometimes only satisfactory. Throughout the school, students have a good understanding about emotional and sexual health issues. They are polite and welcoming and a very large number take full advantage of the wide range of opportunities to take leadership roles, for example in sports, languages, dance and as the innovative Short Burst leaders who support concentration in lessons. They contribute to developing the school by taking part in learning walks and participate in voluntary work overseas. Students develop practical basic skills to help them in their future working lives and benefit from good guidance on matters such as job applications. The curriculum has opportunities in several areas for students to develop an understanding of different cultures and as a result they express a lively interest in exploring issues related to religious and cultural diversity. They respond well to opportunities to express their own views and feel their opinions are valued.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In over two thirds of the lessons observed during the inspection teaching was judged to be good or better. The school has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and has tackled weaknesses effectively. Teachers plan interesting activities for students and make good use of technology to bring tasks to life. Teaching assistants support the learning of all students effectively, especially those needing extra help with their work. Teachers plan their lessons well and include opportunities to assess students' understanding. They often plan for different levels of ability and take care at the start of lessons to introduce and explain the various activities which are usually well designed to provide challenge. There are opportunities for students to develop as independent learners. Occasionally lengthy whole-class question and answer sessions slow the pace of learning for groups of students, particularly those who are less confident in volunteering answers. Teachers do not always ensure as many students as possible are encouraged to respond or provide opportunities to discuss their learning with others. Where progress is only satisfactory students are often all required to do the same tasks and some of the more able students have insufficient time to tackle the more demanding extension activities that would deepen their understanding. The quality of feedback students receive in marking is variable as is students' understanding of the level at which they are working or how to improve further.

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A strength of the curriculum is in the way it is adapted to meet individual needs. For example, a specially selected number of options at the end of Year 8 allows for personalisation early in Key Stage 4. Residential visits build self-esteem and special whole-day events provide students with a wide range of experiences not easily provided in normal classroom situations. The delivery of personal, social and health education as discrete sessions by a specialist team ensures equality of provision for all. The school's partnerships with other providers ensure that students who find a traditional curriculum challenging are well supported.

The personal care and support for students is very good, especially those who are vulnerable. There are very effective links with primary schools to ensure transition arrangements are smooth. Well-established links with a range of agencies outside the school have a strong impact on outcomes. Students who have had difficulties in other schools and have been moved to Tibshelf settle well and suffer little disruption to their learning. The care for students on the Wingfield site has not yet successfully reduced persistent absence, which is rising.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The whole school community is committed to improvements. Middle leaders support each other with complementary skills and good practice is shared to good effect across the two sites. They drive improvements in their areas of responsibility successfully; for example, achievement in English has improved and variability in other subjects reduced. Strategies that have been successful in one area for improvement are adapted and applied to areas of weaker performance, with the result that the school has continued to improve when there have been a number of pressures that could easily have diverted leaders' efforts. Staff morale is good in the face of the need to reduce numbers as the schools have amalgamated. The demands and costs of running two sites so far apart cannot be underestimated.

The school is ambitious for its students. Monitoring of performance is rigorous and where differences in progress between groups have been identified, for example between boys and girls in English, effective action has been taken to improve. Good systems ensure parents are kept informed of their children's progress and there are mentoring meetings with tutors at which targets for improvement are set or reviewed. The relatively new website enables parents to view progress and know if their child is achieving or underachieving. They can also check on attendance and the school plans for them to eventually be able to see what a child has for lunch.

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The governing body discharges its duties well, providing support and a good degree of challenge. It ensures safeguarding meets statutory requirements. The school makes a good impact on the cohesion of the local community and national and excellent international links take this to other contexts. Within the school, leaders are prioritising ways of bringing the communities on the two sites together. Despite considerable financial restraints and the added burden on staff of travelling between relatively distant sites, imaginative joint learning days are planned to take place throughout the year.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Although only a relatively small number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, their responses were positive. They were most satisfied that the school was helping their child to enjoy their education. Whilst over three quarters of the responses were happy with the information they received on their children's progress, many would like more help with supporting their children's learning. They were very happy that the school keeps their children safe and an above average number were satisfied that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tibshelf School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 950 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	35	42	55	8	10	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	36	41	53	2	3	2	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	26	44	57	8	10	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	34	37	48	10	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	38	39	51	6	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	27	37	48	14	18	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	19	45	58	11	14	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	27	41	53	2	3	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	30	38	49	8	10	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	29	39	51	11	14	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	25	43	56	6	8	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	23	30	41	53	12	16	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	40	34	44	8	10	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



5 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Tibshelf School, Alfreton, DE55 5PP

Thank you for the way you welcomed us into your school this week. We found many things to congratulate you on and judged the school to be good. We were impressed by the huge contribution so many of you make to the school, local and international communities. You make good progress and your test results show that the standards many of you reach are above average. This is because you have good leaders in the school who have made sure that teaching is good and you have the right subjects and courses to suit your individual needs. I was pleased to see that the boys are making better progress and closing the gap between them and the girls. Also it is good that you are all making better progress in English as this is so important to you for the future. We appreciate how unsettling it is for you all in these uncertain times for the school and agree that you need better surroundings, but we are delighted to hear that you take good care of the buildings and grounds by not dropping litter, for example. We saw how well you behave around the school and in lessons and are pleased that you told us you feel safe at school.

There are three things we want the school to improve further:

Make sure your teachers use questions in lessons to check how well you are progressing and encourage more of you to participate in this part of the lesson.

Encourage more of you to eat healthily because, although you know how important exercise and diet are, many of you make less than healthy choices in food. It is good that you take lots of exercise though.

Although most of you attend well, we want the school to ensure that the small number of you from the North Wingfield site who are persistently absent receive all the support needed to attend more regularly. I hope those of you to whom this applies will respond positively to the school's efforts.

I and my team of inspectors wish you all the very best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector

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