

South Holderness Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118080
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	339134
Inspection dates	04–05 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Clive Moss HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	3
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,857
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ann Sweeting
Headteacher	Mr Martin Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the college's work, and looked at college data on students' performance, records of the support provided to students and their progress, college plans, policies and procedures, including health and safety and risk assessments, 502 parental questionnaires, and questionnaires completed by staff and students.

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

- the effectiveness of teachers' use of assessment and other data on students' progress
- the effectiveness of support for students needing additional help
- the quality and effectiveness of self-evaluation at all levels throughout the college
- the effectiveness of action to improve the sixth form
- how well students behave.

Information about the school

South Holderness Technology College is almost twice the size of the average secondary school. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average overall, but is almost one third of the students in Year 7, and above average for those with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is very low. The college serves a relatively advantaged population with an average proportion of students eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students that enters and leaves the college at times other than the usual is average. The college is a specialist technology college. It has received several awards for the quality of its provision, including the national Healthy Schools Award, Sportsmark, and the Eco Schools Silver Award.

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

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

South Holderness Technology College provides a satisfactory education for its students. It is improving and has some good features, notably the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4, and the quality of the care, guidance and support for students. The students make satisfactory progress and reach above average standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 4, and average standards in the sixth form. They enjoy their learning. This is shown in the comments they made to inspectors and in surveys carried out by the college and for the inspection. Attendance is good and levels of persistent absence are low.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Students say that lessons are generally enjoyable. There is, however, a wide range in the quality of teaching. The best practice in teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons and improve students' learning, evident during the inspection, is not used consistently in all lessons. As a result, the work set is not always sufficiently challenging and students are not always entirely clear about what they need to do to succeed.

The broad and balanced curriculum provided by the college is highly effective in securing students' interest, motivation and involvement. This is particularly true at Key Stage 4, which has contributed significantly to the sustained improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection. Students are provided with good opportunities to develop skills and understanding relevant to their future economic well-being. The curriculum is augmented by a rich variety of popular extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music. The college has used its specialist status well to develop links with the local community.

Relationships between students and with the staff are good. Students are cared for, guided and supported well. The college provides thorough support to students, particularly those who need additional help or who may be at risk of disengaging from their education. Support is adapted to students' particular needs and makes very effective use of a wide range of external services and agencies. Students are aware of how they can get help of any kind, if they need it, and are confident that their needs will be met and their concerns will be responded to. As a result, they feel safe and happy at the college. Most students behave well, although they do not always show sufficient care and consideration in crowded areas, and most, along with their parents and carers, say that behaviour at the college is improving. This is confirmed by significant reductions in the number of incidents of misbehaviour,

bullying and exclusions, but many students say that lessons are still interrupted sometimes by the misbehaviour of a few and a minority of parents and carers are also concerned about behaviour.

The college's capacity to improve further is satisfactory. The headteacher and senior leaders are unequivocally determined to raise standards of attainment by improving the quality of teaching and learning and are securing an enthusiastic response among the teaching staff. They enjoy the support of a very committed governing body. It is common, for example, for a large number of staff to give up their time to enable college activities to take place at weekends. Senior leaders evaluate the college's progress critically and accurately, using thorough systems for monitoring and reviewing the work of the college, but the practice among middle leaders in using these systems is inconsistent, in both the main college and sixth form. As a result, while there has been sustained improvement in examination results at Key Stage 4 since the last inspection, there remains too much variation in the performance of different subjects both in the main college and the sixth form.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by; ensuring more consistent use of the assessment information available at the college to plan lessons better and develop activities that engage the interest of students more; ensuring more consistent use of the best practice evident at the college in assessing students' learning needs during lessons, to provide more focused and targeted approaches for students, and appropriately challenging work; providing students with clearer information about what they need to do to succeed.
- Remove the variation in the performance of different subjects by ensuring more consistent use by middle leaders of the best practice evident at the college in monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the work of their teams, particularly the quality of teaching and learning, and in setting appropriately challenging and realistic targets for improvement.
- Improve the progress and attainment of students in the sixth form by focusing more on monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and reducing the variation in the performance of different subjects.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils/children

3

Examination results at the end of Key Stage 4 are typically above average. Students are increasingly well motivated towards learning and they make satisfactory progress. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of students at the college, regardless of background and including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A high proportion of students goes on to further education or training after Key Stage 4. Good attendance and punctuality, increasingly high attainment, including in vocational and work-related courses, and

take-up of post-16 opportunities, mean that students are well prepared for their futures.

Most students value their college and speak well of it. They say they feel safe at college and a large majority of parents and carers say the college keeps their children safe. Students say that instances of bullying are reducing, although it remains a concern for a small minority of parents and carers. Generally, students show ability to reflect on moral issues and are aware of the consequences of their actions. A majority of students take advantage of the healthy food options available in the college dining room. Many take part in the wide range of sporting, physical and outdoor activities offered by the college. A very large majority of parents and carers think the college helps their children to be healthy.

Students take part willingly in a variety of opportunities to contribute to the college community, including, for example, mentoring other students, sports leadership programmes and attending governors' meetings, but do not always volunteer for activities in large numbers. Students have shown generosity and commitment in raising impressive sums of money for charitable causes and are involved in projects to improve aspects of their local community. Discussions with students revealed, however, limited understanding of other communities and cultures.

These are the grades for pupils'/children's outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

In the lessons seen during the inspection, students showed a desire to learn and behaved well when the teaching was planned carefully and focused on what the college's assessment data revealed about the students' needs. These lessons provided all groups of students with appropriately challenging and stimulating work and resulted in equally good progress. In other lessons, teachers' planning lacked sufficient detail and focused more on what the teacher would do, rather than what the students would learn. These lesson plans did not use effectively the assessment data available at the college to plan for the needs of different groups of students, resulting in lessons that lacked sufficient challenge or pace. As a result, students' interest waned and behaviour became increasingly less satisfactory. Students are

generally well informed about the levels they have achieved in their subjects and their targets, but are often less clear about what they need to do to reach them. The quality of teachers' marking of students' work is varied and does not always provide students with clear advice on how to improve.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and increasingly flexible in meeting the needs of different groups of students. The wide variety of accredited courses offered by the curriculum at Key Stage 4 has contributed to students' increasingly positive attitudes towards education and training, as demonstrated by the extremely low number subsequently not in education, employment or training, and by rising pass rates in examinations. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of themed activities, days and weeks. This included, for example, a recent visit by Year 9 students to New York to compete in a 'mock trial' competition in which they were very successful. Generally, students have insufficient opportunities to experience more diverse communities and cultures.

The college is successful in providing a welcoming learning environment for its students. The college's arrangements for the transition of students into, through and beyond the college have won a national award for quality. Students receive good quality information, advice and guidance about future courses and careers opportunities. There are clear procedures for staff to raise any concerns about a student and these are dealt with appropriately. 'The Hub' provides good support for students most in need of additional help and has contributed significantly to the college's ability to avoid excluding students who might otherwise have been excluded and, for example, resulted in very significant improvements in the attendance of these students. This, and a range of other strategies, such as the recently introduced 'nurture group', help students to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Many parents and carers are satisfied with their children's experience at college, but a small minority feel there are insufficient opportunities to be involved in supporting their children's learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have become more ambitious since the last inspection in the targets they set for students' success, endorsed by the governing body which has close connections with the college. Senior leaders produce detailed and aspirational plans for improvement based on accurate and critical self-evaluation, and which focus on improving teaching and learning. There is a comprehensive system of self-evaluation, but managers responsible at all levels for carrying it out are not always focused sufficiently on students' learning outcomes when making their judgements.

The college works well with a broad range of other schools and agencies. These partnerships make an important contribution to the good quality of care, guidance and support that students receive, and to the curriculum. The college obtains the views of students, parents and carers, systematically and regularly, and uses them to inform its self-evaluation and improvement plans. Relationships with parents and carers are generally positive, but a small minority experience difficulties in communicating with and receiving a response from the college, and some say that the college does not take sufficient account of their views.

The college has a basic policy for promoting equalities and has ensured there are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of students. Levels of reported racist incidents are very low and have been dealt with effectively. The Key Stage 4 curriculum has been planned well, taking good account of students' needs and local circumstances. There are various aspects of the college's curriculum and specialist college activities that contribute towards community cohesion, but the college does not yet have a fully coherent approach. All regulations for safeguarding students are met and the college ensures the arrangements for doing so are in line with government requirements and guidance on good practice. The arrangements for carrying out checks on staff are very robust.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

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

Sixth form

Students make broadly satisfactory progress from their wide range of starting points and reach average standards of attainment. A very high proportion of students complete their chosen courses and all go on to further education, training or employment, many into higher education. Students enjoy being in the sixth form. The personal development and well-being of students are good. Students make an important contribution to the college by taking on a variety of leadership roles and providing support for younger students. They take responsibility for their own health, safety and well-being. The college has good quality assessment and monitoring information about the students, but this is not used consistently to evaluate the quality of teaching and to plan lessons. As a result, the progress made by students varies considerably between courses.

The best lessons seen in the sixth form provided a good level of challenge to students but this was not consistent across all lessons. Recent changes to the curriculum have ensured that students are recruited to courses more appropriate to their needs and capabilities. Students say they receive good quality advice and support with their future options, which enables them to make sensible, reasoned choices.

There has been a significant increase recently in the level of attention given to students' academic progress by senior leaders in the sixth form. This has led rapidly to important improvements in the culture of the sixth form, remarked upon by students, which is now focused on students' progress and learning. There has not been sufficient time, however, for this and the improvements to the curriculum to produce better rates of progress and higher levels of attainment.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth Form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are supportive of the college and a large majority are happy with their children's experience. The proportion of parents and carers who hold positive views of the college is increasing, providing further evidence of the improvements seen during the inspection. Most parents and carers think that their children enjoy their education, that their children are kept safe and that the teaching is good. A small minority thinks that the college does not do enough to help them support their children's learning and finds the college unresponsive to their suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Holderness Technology College 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 502 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,820 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	146	29	304	60	39	8	6	1
The school keeps my child safe	143	28	319	63	24	5	9	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	119	23	328	64	48	9	7	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	129	25	302	59	52	10	5	1
The teaching is good at this school	93	18	333	65	48	9	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	14	335	66	74	15	4	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	87	17	357	70	39	8	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)	100	20	326	64	26	5	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	108	21	337	66	42	8	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	131	26	283	56	58	11	17	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	74	15	308	61	50	10	11	2
The school is led and managed effectively	108	21	338	66	30	6	5	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	139	27	309	61	37	7	10	2

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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>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.



6 November 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of South Holderness Technology College, Hull, HU12 8UZ

Thank you for talking to my colleagues and me and making us welcome when we visited your college recently. We spoke with you in lessons, around the college and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by you and your parents/carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of our main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- South Holderness Technology College provides you with a satisfactory education. It does some things well, such as providing you with good care, guidance and support, and a good curriculum.
- You make satisfactory progress from your starting points when you join the college and the standards you reach by the end of Key Stage 4 are above average and average in the sixth form.
- Your attendance is good.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory. You told us that there is little bullying and that behaviour is improving at the college, but that misbehaviour still stops you learning in lessons sometimes. Some of your parents are still concerned about this.
- Most of your parents support the college and think it is doing a good job. Some of them would like to get more information from the college to help support you with your learning.
- The college provides a wide range of subjects for you to study and other activities that you find very interesting and are helping you to learn.
- The headteacher and the staff at the college have a good understanding of what needs to be done to make things even better.

I have asked the governors, headteacher and the staff to make sure all lessons provide you with a good level of challenge, a clear understanding of how well you are doing and what is needed to help you do better, so that you can make as much progress as possible. I have asked them to make sure that there are fewer differences in how successful different subjects are, and to make similar improvements in the sixth form. Many of you, I know, already make a very important contribution to the college and I am sure all of you will want to do everything you can to support the staff in making South Holderness better still.

Yours sincerely

Mr Clive Moss HMI

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