

# Winterhill School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106950
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	336777
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Tanya Harber Stuart HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Anne Hinds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Roger Burman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	January 2009
<b>School address</b>	High Street Kimberworth Rotherham S61 2BD
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 39 lessons, observed 31 teachers and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of governing body meetings, school improvement planning, evaluation documents and students' attainment records. The inspection also considered 131 parental questionnaires and 247 students' questionnaires.

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

- the achievement of students
- the effectiveness of teaching and the challenge and support given to students in lessons
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management, particularly middle leaders.

## Information about the school

Winterhill School is a much larger than average secondary school, which mainly serves the wards of Rotherham West and Keppel. The proportion of students who are entitled to a free school meal is larger than the national average. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and has risen by seven percentage points in the past three years. However, the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The percentage of students who speak English as an additional language, although below the national average, has almost doubled in the past three years. The school is a specialist technology college.

The school was served with a notice to improve in January 2009 because the standards reached by students at the end of Key Stage 4 were too low and students were making inadequate 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: how good is the school**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Since the last inspection, the leadership and management of the school, and in particular the headteacher and the two deputy headteachers, have effectively secured improvements in teaching, the curriculum and in care, guidance and support. The curriculum, together with care, guidance and support are now good and are strengths of the school. In particular, the bespoke packages provided for more vulnerable students are instrumental in enabling them to access a broad and balanced education which meets their needs and interests. These improvements in provision have impacted positively on the amount of progress students make and on their attainment.

Students enter the school with levels of attainment which are broadly in line with the national average. In 2009, at the end of Key Stage 4, students reached levels of attainment which were significantly higher than those reached by students in 2008. The percentage of students achieving five A\*-C grades at GCSE rose from 50% to 70% and the percentage of students who achieved this in English and mathematics rose from 36% to 44%. Overall, students who left the school in 2009 made satisfactory progress during their time at the school. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities also made satisfactory progress because of the support they receive. This satisfactory progress has continued and students are reaching levels of attainment which are in line with the national average.

Teaching, although still satisfactory, has improved. Good practice is shared and this is helping to develop teaching. The school has a whole-school data tracking and assessment system which clearly shows the amount of progress students are making. This assessment is not always used effectively in lessons to ensure that the work students are asked to do specifically caters for their needs and interests. In addition, students are not always aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Therefore, the progress students make in too many lessons is limited to satisfactory.

Good safeguarding policies and procedures are in place; students and parents and carers agree that the school is a safe environment.

Leadership and management are good. The school has effective procedures for monitoring its work, and the impact of the work on outcomes for students. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and focused well. Given the improvements since the last inspection, and in particular the improvement in attainment, capacity to improve is good. Governance, however, although satisfactory, does not always offer the support and challenge needed by leaders and managers in the school. In particular, links with departments are weak. The school promotes community cohesion well, but governors do not review this regularly enough to realise the good impact it has.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the levels of attainment and increase the progress made by students in all subjects to good, by:
  - increasing the proportion of lessons in which students make good or better progress
  - developing the use of assessment in lessons to provide students with work which meets their needs and interests
  - ensuring that students know exactly what they have to do to improve their work
  - continuing to develop and share the good practice in the school.
- Increase the amount of challenge and support offered by the governors, by:
  - strengthening their links with subject departments
  - ensuring that they are more proactive when there are areas of concern
  - regularly reviewing the impact of the school's role in promoting community cohesion.

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**

<b>3</b>
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In 2009, the levels of attainment reached by the students were significantly higher than those in 2008. Given the students' ability on entry these levels of attainment indicate that students made satisfactory progress during their time at the school. However, students did make less progress in mathematics than in other subjects. Levels of attainment in the school's specialist subject of technology were significantly higher than the national average, with a higher percentage of students achieving both A\*-A and A\*-C grades than would be expected. Students who speak English as an additional language made satisfactory progress. This is because of the way their needs are met in lessons and the support given through inclusion and the achievement centre provision. Boys' attainment, an issue in the last inspection, is improving and they are now making satisfactory progress. The improvements made to the curriculum have enabled boys to make this progress. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for well and the bespoke packages provided for them ensure that they make the same satisfactory progress as their

peers. The evidence seen at the time of the inspection in terms of lesson observations, data tracking, work scrutiny and unvalidated examination results show that all students are now making satisfactory progress in all subjects.

Students have many opportunities to take responsibility in school. They take on these responsibilities with enthusiasm and have been instrumental in improving both the school and local community. Behaviour is good: students behave considerately to each other and to staff. Students know what they need to do to keep healthy and many participate in the extra-curricular activities provided.

Attendance is above average and is continuing to improve. In addition, the number of students who are persistently absent is reducing. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because of the many and varied opportunities provided by the school through the curriculum and the care, guidance and support. In particular, the achievement centre has been instrumental in developing the economic well-being of more vulnerable students.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good there are always good relationships between staff and students, the expectations of students are clear and students are fully aware of what they need to do to improve. This is because of the good marking and assessment which keeps them informed. However, this is not the case in all lessons and teaching overall is satisfactory. This is because in too many lessons assessment is not used effectively to provide students with work which meets their needs and interests.

The school has implemented a new curriculum, which is good. This better meets the needs of students and the rise in attendance is testimony to its success in engaging students. In particular, the single gender English lessons are enthusiastically welcomed by students. These lessons are increasing the challenge offered to students and are contributing to the satisfactory progress students are now making.

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

In physical education, and in the school's specialism of technology, there is outstanding practice in engaging students of all backgrounds to enable them to develop lasting skills, interests and aspirations for life beyond school.

Care, guidance and support are good. Involvement with parents and carers is strong. The transition arrangements between Year 6 and Year 7 are good and enable the school to meet the needs of the more vulnerable students. The guidance given to students in Year 11 has helped to reduce the proportion of students who are not in education, employment or training when they leave school and this is now below the national average. The high quality of care, especially that of the 'behaviour for learning' teams, is appreciated by the students who stated that they always had someone to talk to if they needed to.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a strong leader with a clear shared vision. He and the two deputy headteachers have been extremely effective in their leadership and management since the last inspection. This means that care, guidance and support and the curriculum are now good, the progress made by students has improved and is now satisfactory, and teaching, although still satisfactory overall, is improving. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

Leaders and managers at all levels have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The priority given to improving teaching has been welcomed by staff. The leadership of teaching is good at all levels, including that of middle leaders, and has resulted in a variety of well thought through strategies which have improved the level of attainment achieved by the students. There are challenging targets for all students and these are used well to raise attainment. The school has focused on developing the opportunities for all groups of students, in particular the more vulnerable and the gaps in attainment are closing rapidly.

Community cohesion is good, especially at the school, local and national level. The impact of this is felt through the school particularly in promoting good relationships between students. The school has many partnerships which are enhancing the education provided for the students.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are good.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

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

**Views of parents and carers**

131 parents and carers answered the questionnaire. Some parents and carers were concerned about the standard of behaviour in the school, but the inspection team judged it to be good. Parents and carers were supportive of the school with the vast majority stating that their children enjoyed school and that they were happy with their children's experience at the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Winterhill 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 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	39	68	52	9	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	51	39	74	56	5	4	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	61	47	64	49	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	40	67	51	8	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	47	36	74	56	6	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	27	73	56	16	12	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	23	75	57	20	15	2	2
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)	38	29	79	60	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	29	80	61	7	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	31	63	48	20	15	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	23	70	53	15	11	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	40	31	76	58	9	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	37	66	50	8	6	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 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>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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



12 March 2010

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Winterhill School, Rotherham, S61 2BD**

Thank you for welcoming my team and me to your school during its recent inspection. As you know your school was given a notice to improve in 2009 because of the lack of progress many of you made during your time at the school. I am delighted to say that because of the hard work by you, your teachers and the leadership and management of the school, that it is no longer the case. Your attainment has improved and you are now making satisfactory progress.

You are also attending school more. We agree with you that you all work well together and that you are safe in school. In addition, the number of you who are being excluded because of inappropriate behaviour is decreasing.

To make Winterhill an even better school we have asked the school to:

- ensure that you make even better progress in all your lessons
- make sure that the marking that teachers do links to the work you are asked to do in lessons
- making sure that teachers share what they know about good teaching with each other
- ensure that the governors of the school are involved more fully in the life of the school.

You can help by continuing to attend school regularly and working hard in lessons.

I wish you well for the future,

Yours sincerely  
Tanya Harber Stuart

Her Majesty's Inspector

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