

Westborough High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107775
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	377646
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2012
Lead inspector	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	Trust School
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mumtaz Mir
Headteacher	Janet Pruchniewicz
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Additional inspector

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Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 42 lessons taught by 42 teachers, one-to-one support sessions, an assembly, tutor group sessions and made a series of brief visits to lessons. They held many discussions with students during lessons also and informally outside of lessons. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and members of the Trust, and with members of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the quality of teaching, students' attainment and progress, 147 parental questionnaires and others completed by the students and the staff.

Information about the school

The school is broadly average in size, but the number of students on roll has increased since the previous inspection, partly as a result of an amalgamation with another local school in September 2011. It operates currently on two sites. The proportion of girls at the school is low. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average and has increased since the previous inspection. The proportion of students from minority-ethnic backgrounds is four times the national average, with students of Pakistani heritage comprising 68% of the school roll. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is more than six times the national average and these students make up around three quarters of each year group. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported at 'school action' is almost three times the average, although the proportion with higher levels of need is below average. The students with special educational needs and/or disabilities have a range of needs, but behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, and speech, language and communication difficulties make up the largest groups. The school has specialist status for business and enterprise and the performing arts, and holds several awards, such as the Artsmark Gold, for the quality of its work in particular areas. The school is part of the Dewsbury Learning Trust. The school has been in line with the government's 'floor' standards for the last three years.

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

The overall effectiveness of the school is good.

The achievement of the students is good.

- The students make much better progress than might be expected given their starting points.
- The students' attainment is now above average on some measures.
- For the measures where the students' attainment is still below average, the gaps to the national average are closing rapidly.

The quality of teaching at the school is good.

- The students find lessons interesting and they engage in them well.
- Well-chosen topics and materials encourage curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.
- Students with additional learning needs are supported well and make good progress.
- The teachers provide well for developing the students' literacy, but opportunities to develop speaking skills and numeracy in different subjects are less well developed.
- The students respond well in lessons and show that they enjoy learning.

The behaviour and safety of the students are good.

- The students' attendance is above average.
- The students respond well to the teachers, are respectful towards adults and each other and conduct themselves sensibly and safely around the school.
- Misbehaviour is dealt with effectively and instances are reducing.

The leadership and management at the school are good.

- There is a consistent and sustained trend of improvement in students' attainment, at faster rates than are seen nationally.
- The curriculum is broad, flexible and designed to meet the needs of the students.
- The school provides well for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the students.
- The leaders and managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and work very effectively to improve the quality of teaching.

- Comprehensive and well-managed processes for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, professional development for the staff, and performance management are leading to sustained improvements in the quality of teaching.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the levels of progress made by students in all subjects, particularly English and mathematics, by focussing on increasing the proportion of students making four or more National Curriculum levels progress.
- Increase the focus on developing speaking and numeracy skills throughout the curriculum, particularly by:
 - ensuring that students use full sentences when answering questions and making comments orally in lessons
 - correcting errors in the way students express themselves orally
 - encouraging the use of correct terminology and increasing the students' vocabulary in oral responses
 - engaging all students in answering questions orally in lessons
 - encouraging all students to ask their own questions and to discuss answers
 - providing more opportunities to develop numeracy in different subjects.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The students enter the school with levels of skills and knowledge that are very low, particularly in reading, writing and speaking. Generally, they make much better progress than might be expected given those starting points, particularly Pakistani-heritage students and students who speak English as an additional language. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make significantly more progress than similar students nationally and reach much higher levels of attainment. The students' progress in mathematics and English is not quite as strong as in other subjects and their attainment is below average. However, the students make significant gains in their reading levels and almost all parents and carers think their children make good progress with their literacy and numeracy skills.

The students respond well to the teachers and enjoy learning. They engage in lessons well, although their concentration can slip when the pace of a lesson is not rapid and, occasionally, they have to be reminded to stop talking when the teacher needs to say something. The students enjoy discussions and are often keen to discuss a broad range of topics, although many find it difficult to express their views clearly and at length. Whilst the inspectors saw many examples of work by teachers to promote literacy skills, work to develop numeracy throughout the curriculum was less apparent.

Data on the students' progress and attainment is used extensively to provide a range of carefully targeted and effective additional support, sometimes one-to-one with the students. Such support contributes, for example, to the significant gains students make in their reading levels and also encourages the students to aspire to higher levels of attainment, often beyond what the data suggest the students might achieve.

On some measures, such as the proportion gaining five or more good GCSE grades, attainment is now above average. Where the students' attainment is still below the national averages, the gaps are closing well. The gaps in English and mathematics attainment are closing rapidly. Most students, consistently, go on to further education or training and almost none are not in education, employment, or training after leaving the school.

Quality of teaching

The teachers make good use of detailed information about the students' attainment to provide lessons that challenge the students and are focussed on increasing attainment. The teachers select topics and materials for study, including using information and communication technology, which spark the students' interest and fosters curiosity and enthusiasm. In a good geography lesson, the teaching promoted good development of literacy skills by having the students identify and use connective words when answering questions on significant issues related to the closure of a restaurant. A variety of activities, carefully considered questions and stimulating visual materials sustained the students' interest. A good music lesson engaged the students well in considering issues connected with the slave trade by looking at connections with the origins of blues music. In a lesson about managing personal finances, the students responded well to discussions about the social implications of using credit cards and other types of loans.

Generally, learning in lessons proceeds at a brisk pace and the inspectors saw good examples of lessons being re-shaped in the light of the teachers' assessment of the learning taking place. Activities are adapted according to the needs of different groups of students. In the less successful lessons that the inspectors observed, the pace of learning was slowed when the teaching took insufficient account of the progress being made by the students and so tasks were not adapted accordingly, or by overly long instructions from the teachers. There is often a clear focus on developing students' reading and writing skills, but approaches to improving speaking are less systematic and rigorous. The students are not routinely required to extend or develop their ideas, comment on each other's contributions, or ask their own questions, and are not given sufficient, precise feedback on the quality of their spoken contributions.

Support for students with additional learning needs is planned and provided coherently. The staff evaluate the impact of activities on the progress of the students carefully. The students with whom inspectors spoke expressed unanimously positive views about the support they receive from the staff and the data indicate the successful impact of actions on the students' progress. Relationships between the staff and the students are good. Almost all parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire wrote that their children are taught well at the school and most of the students think so too. The inspection evidence supports that view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The students' attendance is generally above average and was close to being high at the time of the inspection. Absences amongst students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are higher than the school's average, but their attendance is notably better than for similar students nationally. The students say that they feel safe at school and the vast majority of parents and carers confirmed this in the inspection questionnaire.

The students behave well. They are respectful towards adults and each other and conduct themselves safely and sensibly in the very narrow confines of the school's corridors and stairwells. Social areas, such as dining halls, are busy and bustling, but relationships between the students are harmonious. Most students say that behaviour at the school is predominantly good. It is managed well and the students confirm that instances of misbehaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. That includes rare instances of bullying and racist behaviour, which, when they occur, usually involve name calling. The level of short-term exclusions from school for misbehaviour is less than half the national level and decreasing each year. The school's data show that the number of occasions when students are subject to the school's internal disciplinary procedures is also decreasing. There have been no permanent exclusions from the school for several years. The school works well with other agencies, such as the school-based police officer, to good effect with students who need more help than most in managing their behaviour. Most parents and carers say that the standard of behaviour at the school is good.

Leadership and management

The leaders and managers have demonstrated good capacity to improve. There is a very clear trend of improvement in the students' attainment that has been consistent and sustained since before the previous inspection. There have been improvements in terms of all attainment measures every year and, for the measures where attainment is below average, the rates of improvement are faster than the national rates. The improvements are the result of comprehensive and detailed monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the students' learning, supported by increasingly sharply focussed governance, enhanced since the last inspection by the adoption of Trust status.

Safeguarding checks are carried out and recorded carefully. The school knows the circumstances of its students very well and ensures there are no significant differences in the amount of progress made by different groups. There remains a strong focus on promoting community cohesion as was noted at the previous inspection, evident particularly in the quality of relationships throughout the school. Almost all parents and carers attend consultation evenings at the school regularly.

Leaders and managers have ensured that the staff focus strongly on groups of students at risk of underachieving. The teachers demonstrate a passion and sense of conviction about their work. A survey of the staff carried out for the inspection shows that almost all understand what the school is trying to achieve and are clear that activity is focused unequivocally on improving continually the quality of teaching. Discussions with the staff revealed widespread opportunities for professional development, close monitoring of students' attainment and progress data, regular and frequent observations of teaching, and rigorous performance-management processes. The senior leaders set high standards for the quality of the school's work and these are communicated effectively by subject leaders and others with responsibilities. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and uses that knowledge well to promote improvements.

Leaders and managers take effective action to improve performance in subject areas where they identify a need for improvement. For example, work with the science department, which included linking with science teachers in another local, high-performing school that is part of the Trust partnership, has resulted in improved performance so that, in 2011, the students made much better progress in science subjects than might have been expected and reached broadly average standards of attainment.

The curriculum is good. It is adapted well to meet the needs of different groups of students and, where needed, for individuals. It has been expanded to provide a broad range of experiences relevant to the school's specialisms. It is supplemented by more than 50 timetabled extra-curricular and enrichment activities every week, offering various types of opportunities from sporting and artistic activities to opportunities to catch up with or undertake additional learning in subjects. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. It is promoted well through initiatives such as the 'creative minds' programme in Year 7. In one striking example, the students told an inspector how a lunchtime prayer session helped them to clear their minds and prepare for learning in the afternoon. There is a good variety of activities that promote awareness of other countries and cultures.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.
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.



16 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Westborough High School, Dewsbury, WF13 2JE

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

- Westborough High provides you with a good education. It is improving well all the time.
- You make good progress overall from your starting points when you join the school. Your attainment is above average in some respects and, where it is not, such as in English and mathematics, it is improving well and faster than nationally.
- Your attendance is above average. That is commendable.
- Your behaviour is good. The inspectors took note of the way you get on so well together and of how you respond to the teachers well, particularly on the cramped corridors and stairwells.
- You enjoy learning and find lessons interesting, although you can lose concentration if the pace of the lesson is not brisk and occasionally talk when you should be listening to the teacher.

I have asked the staff and the governing body to make sure that there are even more opportunities to improve your skills in speaking and numeracy, and also to find ways for you to make more levels progress than average, particularly in English and mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector

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