

Egerton High School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131885
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	384866
Inspection dates	1 March 2012
Lead inspector	Liz Godman

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachael Lewis
Headteacher	Mark Burgess
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2010
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

Liz Godman

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by six teachers and met with the Chair of the Governing Body and members of staff. Informal meetings were held with groups of students. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation and planning documents and records of students' attendance, behaviour and progress. Questionnaires for parents and carers are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Information about the school

Egerton High School is a smaller than average-sized secondary special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A number of students have additional disabilities and difficulties, including learning difficulties and autistic spectrum conditions. All students have a statement of special educational needs. The majority of students are from a White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A number of students attend alternative provisions on a full or part-time basis. These include mainstream schools, pupil referral units and vocational providers. A small group of students in Key Stage 4 attend the Egerton Turnaround Centre, which provides a nurturing setting away from the main school site.

At the time of the last full inspection in June 2010, the school was placed in special measures. This was the fifth monitoring inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Secure improvements have been made since the previous inspection. This is now a satisfactory school. It is not a good school because students’ achievement, the quality of teaching and the curriculum are in need of some further improvement.
- The students’ achievement is satisfactory. Students make satisfactory progress through the school. Learning in lessons is also satisfactory because students are increasingly prepared to learn, especially when the activities are practical and interest them. Some students have persistent difficulties with communication, reading and writing skills, and lessons in the different subjects are not planned consistently to develop these skills. The presentation of some students’ work is weak. Despite some good examples, opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) are limited overall.
- While there is some good teaching, most teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are engaging and relevant, but these features are sometimes absent. Most work meets the needs of more-able students, but is less accurately matched to the needs of those who find learning more difficult.
- Students’ behaviour is satisfactory. Students report that they feel safe in school and that behaviour has improved because of the school’s effective systems for managing it.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body know the school well. They have used this knowledge effectively to improve the quality of teaching and students’ achievement and behaviour. However, senior leaders do not yet monitor the quality of teaching regularly or in depth, so that identified points for development are not systematically followed up. Although the satisfactory

curriculum meets the needs of most students, it lacks breadth and is not always planned to ensure students' emotional, spiritual and cultural development are promoted sufficiently.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement, particularly in communication, reading and writing across the curriculum, by:
 - assessing more accurately students' skills in these areas
 - providing closely targeted support for students with identified difficulties
 - planning more consistently to promote these skills across the curriculum
 - improving the presentation of students' work, including through the use of information and communication technology.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that there are more lessons where it is good or better by:
 - matching work more closely to the needs of all in the class, especially the less able students
 - providing more activities in lessons that are engaging, relevant and practical
 - ensuring that senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly, identifying clear points for development which are subsequently followed up to ensure their implementation.

- Develop the curriculum so that it better matches students' needs, interests and aspirations by:
 - ensuring it fosters students' emotional and spiritual development
 - broadening the range of experiences available to students
 - planning systematically to extend students' knowledge and experience of a variety of different cultures.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students' learning in lessons has improved significantly and is now satisfactory. Most students arrive at lessons punctually and, during this inspection, almost all students remained in the classroom for the duration of the lesson, completing the work set and responding swiftly to requests from the teacher. Occasionally, inappropriate language detracts from the quality of learning. Students make better progress when they are actively involved. For example, Year 7 students showed high levels of engagement in ICT and physical education (PE) and made good progress. Students in Key Stage 4 recognise the need to cover the work required for their GCSE courses and worked independently and diligently in mathematics and English lessons.

Work in students' books shows that they are making satisfactory progress over time

in English, mathematics and science. A small number make good progress from exceptionally low starting points. Although attainment is low, a few students in the current Year 11 are on track to gain GCSE grades A to G in English, mathematics and science, with a tiny proportion expected to gain a grade C in English. Students at the Turnaround Centre are developing satisfactory personal, social, literacy and numeracy skills.

All groups of students, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, are making at least expected progress. In particular, the progress of younger students is accelerating. Some students of all ages have persistent difficulties in communication, reading and writing skills, due to their special educational needs or their previously disrupted education. Some find it very difficult to pose questions or to explain their work. Others are more confident in speaking, but are less eager to read and write and their work is sometimes poorly presented, although there are good examples of the use of ICT in English. This is helping Key Stage 4 students to draft and modify their written work, although students' use of ICT across the curriculum is inconsistent. Though progress is variable, most have made satisfactory headway with reading by the time they leave school.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. A small amount is good or outstanding and none is inadequate. This, supported by the planned curriculum, secures students' satisfactory progress. Teachers have higher expectations of students' behaviour and work than at the time of previous monitoring inspections. They set clear parameters and implement the school's behaviour strategies effectively. This has had a marked effect on the students' responses, so that almost all lessons proceed with minimal disruption. Students' work is generally assessed accurately and they know what they have done well and how to improve their work, although assessment of communication, reading and writing levels sometimes lacks precision. There are few opportunities for students to check their own learning. An exception was in a Year 7 ICT lesson where students evaluated their work and showed others what they had done. This elicited the admiration of other students who commented, 'Wow! I thought that was sir's work.' Examples of such effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are rare. More commonly, students conform because they want to gain the rewards and avoid the sanctions, rather than because they are inspired by the lesson content. Lessons are often most successful where they incorporate relevant and practical elements.

Most lessons build well on students' prior learning and provide challenge for more-able students. Teachers adjust lessons in line with the students' responses. However, where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, some less-able students are unclear about what to do or lack the communication, numeracy or literacy skills to complete the work. Occasionally, this leads to frustration and inappropriate behaviour, slowing the pace of learning. However, there are also examples of teaching assistants providing effective and sensitive support for students with identified communication and literacy difficulties. This enables them to participate fully in lessons. There is limited use of specific programmes, based on assessed needs, to boost communication and literacy skills and teachers do not always plan consistently to promote these skills in the different subjects of the curriculum. Homework is not set,

but there are examples, particularly in expressive arts and ICT, where students eagerly continue their learning at home.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students' attitudes to learning and conduct in lessons and around the school are now satisfactory, because all staff are effective in implementing the school's behaviour management strategy. This is improving the climate for learning. Students usually relate well to one another and to adults. At the start of the day, they gather in the dining room and engage positively in conversations and games with one another or with adults. Occasionally, in lessons, students are less respectful of others, adults or equipment. This is managed consistently and effectively by staff so that its impact is minimised.

Most students are aware of the risks to their safety and that of others and know how to keep themselves safe in school and in the wider community. There are a few students whose disabilities, for example, autistic spectrum conditions, those who act compulsively or have special educational needs, are such that they find it difficult to understand the impact of their actions on others. In contrast, some are highly sensitive to the needs of others and show good social skills, appreciating others' achievements and maturely accepting defeat in team games. There is some bullying, including cyber-bullying, but students know how to get help and the school responds swiftly. The school keeps careful records of incidents of unacceptable behaviour and bullying. These show a reduction over time in number and frequency of incidents. The use of exclusions has also reduced. These improvements are the result of more consistent use of rewards and sanctions, so that students are now much clearer about the consequences of their actions. Parents, carers, students and staff still raise some concerns about behaviour, but clear systems are in place for the school to respond. Students report that behaviour is better and that the school is now a much safer place, because behaviour is 'more under control'. Some students' attendance remains low, although overall attendance levels are improving, particularly of the younger students.

Leadership and management

The school's leaders have raised the expectations of staff and students. This has improved the quality of teaching and has resulted in more effective systems to ensure students' safety and acceptable behaviour. Leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness are accurate and their findings have been used to make the changes necessary for the school's removal from special measures. There is satisfactory capacity for further improvement. This is because of accurate evaluations, the increasingly stable and strong leadership team and the developing roles of other staff in the school, as well as the improvements made. Following previous monitoring inspections, the school adjusted its improvement plans so that they were more precisely focused on the remaining areas for improvement. Robust and concerted actions have ensured the effectiveness of these plans in securing change.

The local authority has supported the school in monitoring the quality of teaching. This professional development and the effective management of performance have

improved teaching. Senior leaders have focused mainly on improving students' behaviour, but have been less engaged in systematic and in-depth monitoring of the quality of teaching. As a result, lesson observations have not always identified clear points for development to be followed up in subsequent observations.

The governing body is proving effective in providing challenge as well as support for the school's work. The roles of individual members are increasingly clearly defined and the governing body is gaining in its first-hand knowledge of the school's day-to-day work.

Leaders and managers have developed the curriculum so that it gives students a satisfactory grounding in basic skills and in personal, social and moral development. Although there are some positive examples, the curriculum has been less effective in promoting students' emotional stability, spiritual development and knowledge of different cultures. The curriculum does not yet offer the breadth of experience necessary to raise students' aspirations and to capture their interest and enthusiasm for learning.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet requirements. The school knows its students well and works effectively in partnership with other agencies. This ensures that the promotion of equality of opportunities for success and the tackling of discrimination are satisfactory. Staff have good skills to ensure students' well-being and help them come to terms with the difficulties they have experienced. Absences are routinely followed up and robust actions taken where appropriate. A daily check is made on all the students who are educated away from the school's site. Information held by the school indicates that parents and carers are increasingly confident that the school can meet their child's needs.

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.



2 March 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Egerton High School, Trafford, M41 7FZ

I have been visiting your school regularly and have good news for you. It no longer requires 'special measures'. It has improved and is now a satisfactory school.

Your achievement is satisfactory. You progress steadily through the school. Learning in lessons is much better because your behaviour has improved. I know you prefer practical and interesting activities, liking using the computers in expressive arts and playing cricket. Some of you find communication, reading and writing difficult and not all lessons are planned to develop these skills sufficiently. Sometimes, your work is untidy. Where you use ICT to write essays, this helps.

Your school is not yet good because, while there is some good teaching, most teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is good or better, you work hard and keep focused. Although the work meets the needs of those of you who find learning easier, more could be done to help those of you who find the work difficult. Behaviour is much better. You told me you feel safer in school and that you like the options and vouchers as rewards. You also told me that behaviour is more controlled.

Your headteacher, staff and governors know the school well. They have improved your achievement and behaviour. They could do more to check the quality of teaching and to make sure the curriculum gives you a good range of experiences, helping you to be emotionally stronger and to learn more about different cultures.

Therefore, I have asked them to:

- help you to improve your communication, reading and writing
- make sure more teaching is good or outstanding and check this is happening
- broaden the curriculum to better meet your needs and interests.

You can help by working hard and coming to school every day. I wish you success!

Yours sincerely

Liz Godman
Additional inspector

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