

Deyes High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104948
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	355666
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Joan Davis HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1417
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Graham
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Stahler
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2007
School address	Deyes Lane Maghull, Liverpool Merseyside L31 6DE
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Fifty lessons were observed and the same number of teachers seen. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including school assessment data, the school improvement plan, value added analyses, records of lesson observations and the school's self-evaluation of its work. Inspectors also considered an analysis of 483 parent and carer questionnaires as well as others from students and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of all students, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school's actions in response to last year's decline in attainment.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form and outcomes for students.
- Attainment and progress in science.

Information about the school

Deyes High School is a larger than average secondary school, on the northern outskirts of Liverpool. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, but is rising. A very small minority of students are from minority ethnic groups and virtually no students speak English as an additional language. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average, having doubled over the last three years. The school has specialist status for science and mathematics. The school has achieved a number of awards including the International School Award, the Artsmark Gold Award, the School Curriculum Award and the Sportsmark Award. Following the retirement of the previous headteacher, a new headteacher took up the post in September 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Deyes High School is a good school which is rapidly improving. Students achieve above-average levels of attainment and make good progress in most areas of the curriculum. The school provides a caring and increasingly inclusive environment where all students are valued. Students receive good guidance and acquire skills that equip them well for the next stages in their lives. The transition from primary to secondary school is particularly well managed with a nurture group in place to support more vulnerable students. Students feel safe in the school and provision for safeguarding is outstanding. Students say that there is very little bullying and when it happens it is dealt with effectively. Some students speak highly of the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer and most say they enjoy school. Behaviour is good for the most part and students are friendly and polite.

The quality of teaching is good overall. The orderly environment creates a good climate for learning. Students are keen to learn and participate well in lessons, particularly when given the opportunity to work cooperatively with others. Productive links have been established with primary schools, especially in the specialist subjects of science and mathematics. Teaching in English and mathematics is improving under new leadership and the decline in attainment in science last year has been addressed quickly and effectively. The use of assessment to improve learning is inconsistent and in some lessons there are missed opportunities to check that students have understood the work, are making expected progress and have a chance to demonstrate what they have learnt.

The curriculum provides a wide range of courses appropriate to students' prior attainment and interests. The school does well in tailoring the curriculum to the needs and abilities of students and the enrichment programme is now enabling students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to succeed and make good progress.

The new headteacher has provided the vision, challenge and determination which have inspired all members of the school community to secure improvement. She has rapidly put in place many initiatives that are already having a positive impact on outcomes for students. She is supported by an able and experienced senior leadership team who are embracing change for the benefit of the students. The leadership and management of teaching and learning is improving. However, planning for learning is of variable quality and does not always adequately consider the needs of all groups of students. Self-evaluation has lacked rigour in the past, but is now far more accurate, having correctly identified areas of weakness which are now being tackled robustly. As a result, the school's capacity for improvement is good. The school provides good value for money because the quality of teaching is good, as are outcomes for students.

Outcomes in the sixth form are satisfactory. Attainment overall is average and progress is satisfactory. The sixth form is inclusive and good systems of support are in place but the

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school has recognised correctly the need to ensure that students enrol on courses that are appropriate given their prior attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the leadership and management of teaching and learning to ensure that a higher proportion of lessons are good or outstanding by:
 - improving the planning and delivery of lessons to cater for the needs of all students, particularly the lower ability students
 - using assessment both in and out of lessons to inform teaching and learning.
- Raise attainment in the sixth form by ensuring that students are enrolled on the most suitable courses, matching prior attainment with their aspirations and interests.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students arrive at Deyes High with attainment that is slightly above the national average and they make good progress overall so their achievement is good. By the end of Key Stage 4, overall attainment has been above the national average for most key measures during the three years since the previous inspection. However, the Year 11 cohort in 2010 did not achieve as well as in previous years and the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades in GCSE, including English and mathematics, fell slightly although it was still above the national average. This was partly due to poor performance in science. The school provided robust evidence to show that the attainment and progress of current students are better in most subjects, thereby demonstrating that the 2010 outcomes are not indicative of a pattern of decline. This is in part due to the impact of initiatives by new leaders in English and mathematics and a culture of greater accountability. Learning and progress are good in the majority of lessons, where students are keen to do well and are enthusiastic. Some higher-ability students make outstanding progress in some subjects, such as mathematics. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving as they now have the opportunity to gain a wider range of qualifications appropriate to their abilities and interests. This has motivated the students and improved their future prospects. Progress in science is improving after the decline last year and students are now following courses that better suit their abilities.

Attendance is above average. Students speak highly of the advice and guidance given, which prepares them well for their future. Students are friendly towards each other and move about the school in an orderly fashion. Behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. Students are offered a wide range of healthy options in the canteen, but they do not always choose these alternatives. Students have a voice through the school council, which is well run and they organise a very popular annual pensioners' party for local residents.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students enjoy having access to a variety of cultural experiences such as trips abroad and visits to art galleries. During the inspection, a dramatic production by students and teachers was used effectively in an assembly to show the consequences of bullying.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

In the large majority of lessons teaching is good or better and in some instances it is inspirational. In the most successful lessons, teachers have high expectations and lessons have a brisk pace. A wide range of teaching styles and activities, particularly group work, sustain interest and motivation. The majority of teachers have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges students. Teaching resources in many lessons are of high quality and information and communication technology is used to good effect. However, in some satisfactory lessons too much talk from the teacher and a lack of variety results in students becoming too passive, lacking engagement in their learning. Where teaching is weaker, the students do not have enough opportunity to reflect on their learning. Occasionally, the progress of some students is not as good as that of others because the teacher has not planned effectively for their learning. The quality of the support provided by learning assistants for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable.

Assessment practices are inconsistent. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of questioning techniques to gauge the students' understanding and check their progress. They listen to the students' responses, giving the students a chance to deepen their knowledge of the subject and then adjust their teaching accordingly. In weaker lessons, the teachers do not give the students enough opportunity to demonstrate what they have or have not learnt and do not adapt their teaching sufficiently to the needs of the learners.

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Students are aware of their targets but the effectiveness of marking is variable, occasionally lacking clear advice to students on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. Some outstanding initiatives, such as the enrichment programme in Key Stage 4, are starting to have an impact on outcomes for students. A wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities is on offer, however, the students do not always take advantage of this provision. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is extremely popular and inclusive. Parents and carers appreciate the amount of time teachers give to provide these opportunities to enrich the lives of their children. Science, as a specialist subject, contributes well to the rest of the curriculum, for example, the establishment of a weather station which enhances learning in geography. The eco-garden also provides an excellent resource, encouraging students to think about the world outside the classroom.

Care, guidance and support are good. Students speak favourably of the support they receive from their teachers and mentors, which is helping them to secure good outcomes.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has rapidly gained an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. She has shown vision and vigour in galvanising her experienced senior team to move the school forward. The school now has a clear sense of direction focused on learning and the needs of students. Self-evaluation has not been rigorous enough in the past, but the current determination to make use of the wealth of data available is enabling the school to have a far more precise view of its weaknesses. The new headteacher has very quickly established a sharper approach to reviewing the work of the school and there is a growing culture of accountability. Methods employed in the past to monitor the quality of teaching and learning had led to judgements that in some instances were over-generous. This area of the school's work has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher and the leadership team is motivated to seek further improvement. Senior leaders have correctly identified priorities and put in place refined systems for quality assurance.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Students benefit from the school's links with three schools in an area of the country very different to their own. The school also has good international links.

The school has a commitment to equality of opportunity and racist incidents are extremely rare. The inclusion team has worked hard in providing support and an appropriate

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curriculum to ensure that students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and as a result the gap between different groups of students is closing.

Procedures for safeguarding are outstanding. All statutory requirements are met and record-keeping is exemplary. Safeguarding has a high profile in the school, the students know exactly who to speak to if they have a problem. The school works extremely well with key agencies and training is of a high quality in every respect.

The school benefits from the support of a capable and knowledgeable governing body with many governors having a long association with the school. They have shown commitment and are determined to deal with weaknesses. Lack of rigour in the school's self-evaluation in the past meant the governing body had an over-generous picture of some aspects of the school's work. The governing body took great care in the selection of the new headteacher and fully support her vision for the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Sixth form

Overall, outcomes for students are satisfactory, but there is a rising and improving trend. Attainment is average overall and progress is satisfactory. The most-able students do very well; intellectual challenge is evident in lessons and attainment is high. However, students whose prior attainment is weaker have sometimes been enrolled onto inappropriate courses and as a result have not made good progress.

The leadership of the sixth form is good. The leadership team has shown vision and decisiveness in tackling underperformance by introducing an improved curriculum which provides an extensive range of traditional and vocational courses. As a result, students now have the opportunity to choose courses which are much better suited to their abilities and aspirations. Guidance has improved in line with developments in the curriculum and it

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is tailored more to the needs of the individual student. The school has in addition recently put in place a more refined tracking system enabling support to be targeted, especially for more vulnerable students. Teaching is good in the sixth form and teachers show at times excellent subject knowledge.

Collaborative links are well established and the school acknowledges the need to enhance procedures for quality assurance, which are in the early stages of development. Students are happy in this sixth form, reflected in their very high levels of attendance. The sixth form has strong links with the rest of the school. A very large majority of students in the sixth form go on to higher education.

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	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are very supportive of the school. They say that they are happy with their children's experience of the school. A very small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour or help their children adopt a healthy life style. Inspectors found that the school, for the most part, manages behaviour well and that the school does try to encourage healthy lifestyles by providing a range of healthy options in the canteen and an extensive programme of extra-curricular sporting activities. However, inspectors did note that some students remain reluctant to choose the healthier alternatives or participate in extra-curricular sport. Some parents and carers felt that the school could improve its channels of communication. Inspectors found that the school communicates regularly with parents and carers, for example, through progress reports, parents' evenings and the website. Several parents and carers praised the school for the support their children had received, particularly when transferring from primary to secondary school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Deyes High 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 483 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1417 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	120	25	326	67	30	6	5	1
The school keeps my child safe	149	31	316	65	12	2	2	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	186	39	275	57	18	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	177	37	273	57	25	5	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	148	31	302	63	21	4	2	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	106	22	299	62	63	13	2	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	87	18	339	70	46	10	2	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)	118	24	316	65	24	5	2	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	127	26	316	65	25	5	2	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	99	20	279	58	69	14	8	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	75	16	327	68	40	8	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	104	22	340	70	14	3	2	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	167	35	276	57	27	6	4	1

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 February 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Deyes High School, Liverpool, L31 6DE

Thank you very much for the warm welcome we received during our inspection of your school. We were impressed by your friendliness and the good attitudes you show towards one another. We found that your school provides you with a good education and that you appreciate the support and guidance you receive from your teachers and mentors. Many of you enjoy taking part in activities such as drama productions, visits to art galleries and trips abroad.

Your attainment by the end of Year 11 is above average and you make good progress in most subjects as you move up through the school. The school does well in providing you with courses that suit your abilities, interests and hopes for the future. Teaching is good overall and we noticed how enthusiastic you were and keen to learn when the lessons are interesting and well planned. The school cares well for you and you know exactly who to talk to if you have a problem. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have worked effectively to put in place new courses which will interest you and help you to achieve. Examination results in the sixth form are satisfactory overall.

We identified two areas where we think the school should make improvements. First, we have asked your headteacher to work closely with the staff to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best, and to check more regularly whether you have understood the work and are learning well. This will help you make even better progress in all your subjects. Second, we have asked the staff to make sure that all students in the sixth form achieve their potential by enrolling on courses that suit their abilities and interests.

You can help in this by continuing to attend school regularly, working hard and taking advantage of all the wonderful opportunities available to you. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan Davis

Her Majesty's Inspector

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