

Hanson School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107440
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	356157
Inspection dates	10-11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Leszek Iwaskow HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	1790
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susan Williamson
Headteacher	Mr Tim Brookes
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2008
School address	Sutton Avenue
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited and observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons taught by 41 teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies and procedures, safeguarding documentation, data and analysis about students' current and past performance, schemes of work, subject leaders' files, students' work, monitoring reports and analysed 248 parental questionnaires.

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

- why insufficient progress had been made since the last inspection in raising attainment and achievement, particularly in mathematics, but also in English
- the quality of teaching across the school and whether this is having an impact and improving learning.
- behaviour, attendance and punctuality across the school and the impact this is having on learning and achievement
- whether the curriculum is meeting the needs of all learners, particularly at Key Stage 3
- whether management strategies are sufficiently robust and effective in monitoring and supporting school improvement.

Information about the school

Hanson School is a very large specialist technology college situated in the north of Bradford. It is currently undergoing a new build on the existing site which is causing some disruption. The new school buildings are due to open next year. The majority of its students are from White British backgrounds, with around a quarter from different minority ethnic groups. The number of students known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The school has a broadly average percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average. The school makes provision for students on the autistic spectrum and resource centres for both visually impaired and hearing impaired are planned as part of the new school.

The school is part of the Central Bradford Confederation of Schools which supports the delivery of 14–19 education. It is a hub school for the School Sports Partnership and this has helped the school achieve Healthy School status. The school also enjoys Investors in People status, as well as recently being redesignated with the Arts Mark Silver Award.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?	4	
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	4	

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Hanson School is currently facing a range of issues which is having an impact on its ability to provide at least a satisfactory education for the greater majority of its students. Since the last inspection, Hanson School has made too little progress and is even struggling to meet targets in its specialism of mathematics, science and technology. Overall, attainment continues to be well below average and achievement is inadequate, especially in English and mathematics. Outcomes also vary greatly across a range of subjects. Boys from a White British heritage make least progress. Although there are pockets of good teaching, overall the quality of teaching is not meeting the needs of the students and lacks the capacity to eradicate the legacy of underachievement. The lack of challenge, the slow pace, and poor behaviour that disrupts too many lessons prevent a majority of students, who want to succeed, from making good progress. Variations across classes and subjects mean that assessment is not being used well to monitor students' progress and support learning.

The curriculum in examination classes provides appropriate pathways to meet the needs of students and blends both academic and vocational courses well, allowing wide choice. However, at Key Stage 3, the curriculum is not planned or managed effectively and students are getting a very fragmented experience across many subjects, especially the social sciences. The skills-based curriculum in Year 7 lacks cohesiveness and is of poor quality. It is taking a disproportionate amount of curriculum time in terms of the time then left available for several other subjects. As a result, the school is not meeting statutory requirements in several areas, including religious education.

Leaders and managers at all levels lack a clear vision for the school or a coherent plan to bring about improvement. Weaknesses are identified but there is a lack of rigour or clarity in how to tackle them. The quality of provision is not monitored effectively and weak practice has not been challenged sufficiently. Instability in staffing and poor attendance by teaching staff in some subjects has not promoted improvement. Support and training have not led to sufficient improvement in many areas because managers have not maintained the impetus or sustained the effort needed to embed good practice into the culture of the school. The governing body, although supportive, has not been sufficiently involved in asking for answers and challenging the poor or erratic rate of progress, particularly in terms of attainment in English and mathematics.

Most students are keen to do well and the majority have a clear desire to learn. However, many feel that their opportunities are limited by weak teaching or poor behaviour in too many lessons. Routines around the school are not implemented rigorously enough and punctuality remains an issue, which also has a negative impact on learning as well as life and workplace skills. When students are stimulated by good teaching, they respond positively and show what they can achieve. Where a subject is well managed, such as physical education, most students make good progress because incremental steps are planned and activities are well structured to engage interest and build on previous learning. Unfortunately, in many subjects this is not the case and too many students do not receive their full entitlement, especially at Key Stage 3.

The school provides a generally caring environment in which most students feel safe and comfortable. Attendance is low and remains an issue. The school has been more successful in addressing this in the sixth form where students are more motivated to come to school by the better quality of education on offer.

Leaders and managers have not been consistent in providing the vision, drive and energy to enable the school to move forward. As a consequence, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate. The forthcoming move to new premises provides a good opportunity for a fresh start for the whole school community on which future success can be built.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve achievement across the school, but especially in mathematics and English by:
- - improving the quality of teaching to ensure that more lessons are at least good
- recognising the different needs of students, particularly boys, and tailoring lessons to meet these needs more effectively
- providing all students with sufficient challenge and support in lessons to achieve their best
- improving the consistency and accuracy of assessment so that students are clear about what they need to do to improve
- improving behaviour, attendance and punctuality to lessons.
- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body take responsibility and are accountable for:
- developing and sharing a vision for the school's improvement and sustaining the momentum to achieve this
- monitoring the school's work rigorously and evaluating its strengths and weaknesses accurately to provide a secure basis for coherent improvement planning
- developing and delivering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum at Key Stage 3 that provides a full entitlement for students and meets statutory requirements, including those for religious education
- ensuring that learning programmes are planned to progressively develop skills, acquire knowledge and promote understanding

 developing the skills of all leaders so that they can accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and take the necessary action to tackle under-performance and share good practice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

A persistent pattern of low attainment and poor progress has become established, which the school has found difficult to reverse. Despite a range of initiatives, outcomes for students remain poor. Students enter the school with prior attainment that is slightly below the national average. By the time they leave, attainment for too many students is well below the national average. Since the last inspection, the progress that the majority of students make has declined. Despite an improvement in results in 2010 in some subjects, there is insufficient progress evident in the majority of courses offered. Progress is especially poor in English language and mathematics. The school has repeatedly failed to meet its specialist targets at the end of Key Stage 4. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities mirrors that of the rest of the school. However, those with a statement of special educational needs make good progress because of the more focused support provided. Students of White British heritage, especially boys, perform less well than their peers from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Most students feel safe and any incidents of bullying are generally resolved effectively. However, low-level disruption caused by dull teaching in too many lessons has an adverse impact on students' learning. Also, students' movement around the school is too boisterous and frequently disturbs classes in session. Many students are, nonetheless, generally polite, friendly and on the whole keen to learn. They are aware of the need for rules and the consequences that result from their actions. A majority raised disruptive behaviour as a concern which affected their learning. Exclusions, although lower than last year, remain high.

Students take pride in their sporting achievements and the effectively managed and delivered programme of sporting activities contributes well to both encouraging healthy lifestyles and developing links with other schools and the local community. However, students have had only limited impact in making decisions about school life. Students often arrive late for their lessons and this contributes to a lack of urgency and a poor sense of purpose in lessons. As a result, students frequently lack engagement in their learning. This, coupled to below average skills in mathematics and literacy, means students are poorly prepared for their future working lives.

Students are involved in charitable causes and links with Zambia and other schools in the locality have enriched the lives of some. They understand cultural and religious diversity but the lack of appropriate provision for religious education limits their spiritual development.

4

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Although some good lessons were observed, particularly in those subjects which are well managed and organised, too many were barely satisfactory and failed to engage students sufficiently. Staffing and recruitment issues in key subjects such as English and mathematics compound the problem and too few students are making sufficient progress to enable them to close the attainment gap. Generally, teachers exhibit satisfactory knowledge of teaching methods but too many fail to apply these sufficiently well to support learning. In too many lessons inappropriate or low-level tasks lead to students being occupied rather than challenged. There is also great variation in marking, assessment and teaching across classes and subjects, with inadequate practice continuing to blight opportunities for too many students. Weaker lessons tended to focus on teaching rather than learning and were more teacher-dominated. Students, particularly boys, were often allowed to work at a slow pace and much work in books was left incomplete. In these lessons, teachers rarely made effective use of visual resources, including multimedia, and students were often unclear how to access the task. The lack of investment in, and availability of, up-to-date computer technology in many classes further limited the capability of teachers to better engage students in their learning. Consequently, in the weaker lessons, students were often either passive recipients of information or openly inattentive.

There is a sharp contrast in the quality and appropriateness of the curriculum between examination classes and that which is delivered in Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form there is a well balanced programme of courses available which meets the needs of most students. There is a flexible combination of academic and vocational pathways which provides good choice, including some enabled by partnerships with other education establishments. However, at Key Stage 3, curriculum provision is inadequate. There is heavy investment of time and resources in providing a skills-based curriculum for five hours a week in Year 7 with the intention of enabling personal learning and thinking skills to be more firmly developed. However, there is no cohesive scheme of work in place to work towards students acquiring these skills, knowledge and understanding. Much of the work lacks sufficient focus, rigour or challenge. Currently, this is not providing value for money and is limiting the time available to teach history, geography, personal, social, health and citizenship education as well as religious studies. Statutory requirements are not being met, particularly in religious education.

The school makes satisfactory efforts to ensure that students are well cared for. Some aspects are good. The 'Boost' centre brings together agencies and provision into one area and supports well those students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The nurture group is well managed and provision for students who are learning English as an additional language is sound. The visually and hearing impaired students are cared for well and plans for their inclusion into mainstream classes are good. However, these are isolated improvements. Although systems are in place for target-setting and tracking of students' progress, these assessment data are still not used consistently enough in all classrooms to support and improve learning.

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	

These are the grades for the quality of provision

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a lack of shared vision across the school and limited capacity and drive at all levels of leadership to secure and sustain improvement. The culture of the school is not sufficiently receptive to change and accountability. The senior leadership team is not determined enough in its approach to challenging underperformance, particularly of middle leaders. There are no clear and consistent procedures for holding staff to account for underachievement in their areas of responsibility. While support systems for some staff are in place, there is very little action taken to eradicate poor performance. Despite this, there are some curriculum areas such as physical education which are well led and managed. There has been instability in staffing at all levels for a number of years. Attendance of staff in some subjects also gives cause for concern and the school has not, as yet, developed satisfactory systems to limit the negative impact this is having on

students' progress. Recently, more coherent systems have been developed to evaluate the quality of the school's work. However, it is too early to establish how effective these systems may be in improving outcomes for students. The school has also refined its systems of data collection which enable most staff to identify the underperformance of students. However, actions to support these students lack focus and are not specific enough to ensure improvement. Planning for improvement is fit for purpose but there is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of the impact of any initiatives. Steps have been taken to improve the quality of teaching, but these are not yet sufficiently developed at all levels to ensure consistency across all subject areas and aspects of school life.

The school has a supportive, committed and hard-working governing body. However, it has not been rigorous enough in holding the school to account and particularly in challenging underperformance. There are no formal opportunities for the governing body to identify priorities for action or to monitor the impact of initiatives. As a result, it is forced to rely on the school's own account of its progress. Support for the school has also been provided by the local authority which has intervened and set the school challenging targets for improvement.

Satisfactory procedures and practices are in place to ensure and promote safeguarding. Required duties are met. Overall, provision for equality of opportunity is satisfactory but the school is still failing to address comprehensively the issue of underachievement for most of its students, particularly White British boys. Parents and carers are generally satisfied about the care provided but felt that communications between home and school could be improved. The school has not analysed its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context in any great detail and plans to promote community cohesion are underdeveloped. Currently, the school fails to provide at least a satisfactory education for most of its students and gives poor value for money.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

These are the grades for leadership and management

Sixth form

Provision in the sixth form is better than in the main school and is satisfactory overall. Examination results fluctuate from subject to subject. The small numbers entered for some subjects can also create significant variations from year to year. Performance is strongest in vocational BTEC courses, such as sport and health and social care. Students generally perform less well in academic subjects. The number of students staying on in the sixth form varies from year to year. The sixth-form team has an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas which need further development. Planning for improvement is appropriate but lacks a sharp focus particularly on teaching and learning, which is generally satisfactory. As in Key Stage 3, there is a marked fluctuation in the quality of lessons from subject to subject. Students are generally positive and most work hard to be successful. They show positive attitudes to learning, although too many are dependent on the teacher and some lack confidence in their abilities. They enjoy life in the sixth form and appreciate the support they receive. They feel that the checks on their attendance and progress are more rigorous than in the main school but are fair and in their best interests. They are, however, concerned about the poor study facilities and limited access to new technology, especially computers. Students value the good advice they receive, especially regarding entry into higher education. They willingly play a part in leading and organising sixth-form activities and are confident their views are given fair consideration. Despite some areas which are less strong, there is satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form3Taking into account:
Outcomes for students in the sixth form3The quality of provision in the sixth form3Leadership and management of the sixth form3

These are the grades for the sixth form

Views of parents and carers

Just over one in ten parents and carers returned questionnaires. These were generally positive about the school and most parents and carers felt that the school provided a safe and caring environment for their children. However, concerns were raised about communications between home and school. An equal number wished they received more help in supporting their children's learning. Unacceptable behaviour was also a concern and inspectors found that this was an issue, which was also identified by both teachers and the students themselves. Individual parents and carers also expressed concerns about inconsistent approaches to marking across classes as well as weak teaching across a range of subjects.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hanson 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 248 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1790 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	27	158	64	17	7	4	2
The school keeps my child safe	45	18	186	75	14	6	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	19	166	67	26	10	6	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	21	170	69	16	6	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	39	16	168	68	20	8	6	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	10	163	66	35	14	10	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	12	167	67	34	14	8	3
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)	40	16	169	68	13	5	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	11	181	73	23	9	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	28	126	51	37	15	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	9	160	65	39	16	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	27	11	174	70	19	8	9	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	23	162	65	16	6	5	2

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

Glossary

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.

What inspection judgements mean

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see **www.ofsted.gov.uk**). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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:	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.
	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.

12 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Hanson School, Bradford, BD2 1JP

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome. We enjoyed talking to you about your experiences in school. We observed lessons in many of your classes and looked at a lot of your work. This led us to the conclusion that, although your school does some things well, it needs to improve and has been put into 'special measures.' The standards you reach in almost all subjects, but especially English and mathematics, need to improve. For their part the teachers are going to make lessons more interesting and make the tasks they set more challenging. You remarked that poor behaviour in quite a number of lessons is preventing many of you from working to your full potential. You particularly enjoy practical lessons, especially physical education. However, you also find some subjects more mundane and less interesting. We have asked the school to look carefully to ensure that learning is meaningful and relevant for you all. The headteacher, and other school managers, will monitor lessons more regularly and rigorously to ensure that these improvements are taking place.

We also noticed that in Key Stage 3 there is limited time for you to study a range of other subjects because you spend too long focusing on skills in Year 7. We have asked the teachers to look at their planning and make sure that you get your fair share of lessons in the full range of subjects and that you are provided with a wider range of interesting experiences.

If the school is to improve and become a good school you must also play your part. Some of you need to attend school more regularly and get to lessons on time. Others need to work harder in lessons and make a greater effort to improve your work and presentation. Your teachers will be provided with help and support to carry out these improvements and inspectors will visit the school regularly to check the progress everyone is making. You, your teachers, parents and carers, and the governors will all need to work together to ensure that this happens.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Leszek Iwaskow Her Majesty's Inspector



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