

Newsome High School and Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107761
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	356233
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Harrison 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	535
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Ros Rowe
Headteacher	Mr Paul Gittins
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 31 lessons, delivered by 31 teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and students. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including department self-assessments, the school development plan and 89 parental questionnaires, as well as questionnaires from staff and students.

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

- The impact of strategies to improve teaching and learning.
- The extent to which outcomes for learners have improved since the last inspection.
- The rigour of self-assessment.

Information about the school

Newsome High is a specialist sports college. The majority of its students are White British, with around a third from different minority ethnic groups. Around 11% of students speak English as an additional language though few are at an early stage of English acquisition. The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is well above average. The school has an above-average number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It provides resourced provision for students with hearing impairment and those with a physical disability. The school has gained a number of awards, including the Kirklees Inclusion quality standard at gold level and the Investors in People bronze award.

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

Newsome High has improved significantly in recent years and is now a good school. It provides a calm and purposeful environment. Students enjoy coming to school and attendance and behaviour are both good. The school has an inclusive ethos. Students from a wide range of backgrounds and different needs work very well together; they are proud of their school and keen to achieve. The majority of students make good progress against their starting points on entry to the school. Levels of attainment are average and rising. The attainment level of boys on entry to the school is lower than that of girls and girls' attainment is higher than boys at the end of Year 11.

The majority of lessons provide a good level of stimulus and challenge. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects and plan lessons well to help students understand the topics they are studying. Teachers use an interesting range of resources to gain students' interest, and give them plenty of opportunity to participate in lessons, which helps to develop their understanding. Assessment to support learning is satisfactory. A minority of lessons start without teachers sufficiently checking students' previous understanding or skill level. Standards of marking are not always consistent.

The curriculum has been transformed since the last inspection and provides a good range of opportunities. Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school and some aspects are outstanding, for example, the support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result of the good quality of provision, students gain a broad range of skills that help them when they leave school and a high proportion continue with their education. They contribute well to the life of the school and the wider community.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher's vision of a happy school, where students can thrive, is shared by staff. This is backed up by high expectations and challenging targets to drive improvement. Significant investment in learning resources and staff development has transformed the school into a safe, stimulating environment for learning. Self-evaluation is rigorous and performance management is strong. As well as academic performance, there is a strong emphasis on the personal development of students, including their respect for other people. The majority of parents, and the older students, speak very positively about the changes in recent years. The school has good capacity to make further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that strategies to bring about further improvement in the attainment level of boys are effective.

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- Improve the consistency of the quality of marking to ensure all students' work is marked regularly and that marking gives them sufficient guidance on how to improve further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school. They are keen to learn and participate well in lessons and other activities. Attendance and behaviour are both good and students feel safe in the school. As a result of their positive attitudes and hard work, they achieve well. The majority of students make good progress. They acquire skills and knowledge that prepare them well for the future and a high proportion continue with their education after leaving school.

Levels of attainment on entry to the school are lower than average, especially for boys. Attainment by the end of Year 11 is average. Examination results are improving rapidly. The proportion of students gaining 5 A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was below the national average in 2010. Data for the current year from examinations taken in November show a significant improvement in the proportion of students who have already gained a C grade or above in English and mathematics. Results for girls are above those for boys. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, and in some cases outstanding, progress. They also play an important role in the school in developing students' understanding of issues related to disability, for example, methods of communication with hearing-impaired people.

Students care about their school and take a pride in displaying their work. They have respect for each other and a good understanding of other cultures. Students make a good contribution to the local community, and more widely. One example is a song they made using the school's recording equipment, with profits from sales of the CD going to the Japanese tsunami appeal. Within the school, students' views help to bring about improvements, including what strategies work most effectively to help them learn in lessons. Students develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, which is particularly encouraged by the school's sports specialism.

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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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
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 majority of lessons, teachers use interactive methods effectively to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm. These lessons start promptly, often with a quick thought-provoking activity to settle the class and set the context for the lesson. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their enthusiasm for their subject communicates itself well to students. Lessons are well planned to help students explore topics and develop their understanding. Teachers are skilful at using examples students can relate to, building up knowledge and skills at an appropriate pace, and linking theory to practical work. Good, and in a few cases, outstanding teaching was observed across a range of subjects. There is very little inadequate teaching in the school. A minority of lessons are satisfactory rather than good. They do not provide the same level of challenge to students to achieve to the best of their ability, and in a few cases this leads to a deterioration in behaviour that limits learning.

Assessment to support learning is satisfactory. Teachers are becoming more skilful at using assessment in lessons to check the level at which students are working and this is well shared with the class. Peer assessment is used well in some lessons to encourage students to evaluate their own work. However, some lessons start without the teacher establishing sufficiently what the students already understand or can do. Marking of student work is satisfactory but there is a lack of consistency in how regularly it is marked

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and the quality of comments that help students know what they need to do to improve further.

The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection and now meets the needs of students well. At Key Stage 3 there is an effective emphasis on building core skills needed across the curriculum, including interesting project work that spans a number of subjects. From Year 9 onwards, students benefit from a very flexible curriculum in most subjects, which enables them to start gaining qualifications that are appropriate to their individual needs. The information and communication technology provision does not provide sufficient challenge for all and plans are in place to make appropriate changes.

There is an impressive range of vocational choices in Key Stage 4, delivered in school or in partnership with other schools and colleges. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is reviewed regularly and students appreciate the variety of activities they participate in. Personal development, health-related education and enterprise activities are integrated well in the curriculum. The provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding, both within the mainstream curriculum and the specialist resource centre.

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Pastoral support, and the support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is outstanding. There is a very inclusive ethos in the school. A range of initiatives is in place, such as the 'impact' system, to ensure students who need additional support are catered for well. This enables vulnerable young people to continue with their education within a suitable environment. The number of exclusions has fallen dramatically in recent years and is very low. There are good links with external agencies, and students and parents appreciate the work of the community police officer based at the school.

Academic support has improved considerably since the last inspection. Tracking of student progress is good, and interventions are in place to provide additional support where necessary. However, it is too early to see the full effect of these measures in raising further the attainment of boys. Transition arrangements at all stages are very good. There are effective links with primary schools and new students settle quickly into the school. Older students receive extensive careers advice that enables them to make informed choices about the paths they wish to pursue after leaving school.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The school benefits from strong leadership that has brought about significant improvements in recent years. Investment in the learning environment and resources, and staff development, have all contributed to the improved quality of provision. There is an enthusiasm at all levels in the school and strong systems of performance management and accountability.

Extensive partnership work has enabled the school to develop its curriculum and support systems very effectively. The school's specialism is used well to benefit the local community. There is a good sense of cohesion among students from different backgrounds within the school, and effective links with other schools in England and internationally to develop students' awareness of other cultures. Equality of opportunity is promoted well in terms of tackling discrimination, and helping students to understand the needs of others. Strategies are in place to narrow the gap between boys' and girls' attainment but it is too early to see their full impact. Safeguarding procedures are very thorough.

Governance arrangements are effective at providing support and challenge to senior leaders, for example, in dealing with a challenging financial situation arising from falling rolls in previous years. Enrolments are increasing as a result of the school's improved image in the community. Managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they are supported well by staff in efforts to bring about improvements. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to make further improvements.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the Ofsted questionnaire are very positive about the improvements that have taken place in the school. A number said they had no regrets about sending their son or daughter to Newsome and are very pleased with the progress they are making. They particularly value the supportive but challenging ethos of the school and the regular checks on progress. A small number of parents are less happy with how the school takes into account their suggestions or concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newsome High School and Sports College 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 535 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	42	48	54	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	49	43	48	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	60	32	36	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	43	44	49	2	2	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	34	38	50	56	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	27	54	61	5	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	26	55	62	7	8	0	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)	30	34	48	54	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	35	51	57	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	45	40	45	5	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	29	49	55	6	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	55	62	28	31	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	58	32	36	1	1	2	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

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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



9 May 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Newsome High School and Sports College, Huddersfield, HD4 6JN

As you know we recently inspected your school and I am writing to tell you about our findings. We really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for telling us your views. We agree with you that Newsome has improved significantly in recent years and is now a good school. We were pleased to see how motivated most of you are to do well in class, and how well the majority of students behave. We think you participate enthusiastically in lessons and make good progress against your starting points on joining the school. Examination results are rising, and we saw evidence that they will improve further for the current Year 11. It was good to see how many of you participate in activities outside lessons and contribute to the wider community. We enjoyed watching the DVD of the song you recorded to raise funds for the Japanese tsunami appeal. We saw significant improvements in the curriculum on offer to you since the last inspection. Care, guidance and support remain strengths of the school. It was good to see how you respect other people, and we enjoyed the assembly to help us all understand more about the needs of hearing-impaired people. We think you gain a broad range of skills at the school and we were impressed by how many of you progress to college or other training activities at the end of Year 11. The school is well led and managed. In order to improve it even further, we have asked the headteacher to:

- ensure that strategies in place to raise boys' attainment levels are successful
- improve the consistency of marking, so that all your work is marked regularly and that marking helps you to understand what you need to do to improve further.

Yours sincerely

Sue Harrison

Her Majesty's Inspector

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