

Up Holland High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119751
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	363910
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Austin 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	776
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	R Foster
Headteacher	Kathryn Barton
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 40 lessons taught by 39 teachers; held meetings with groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and staff; and had conversations with several parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at data regarding students' attainment and progress as well as documentation relating to safeguarding procedures and the curriculum. Responses to questionnaires completed by 161 parents and carers, 100 students and 41 staff were analysed.

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

- Students' attainment, particularly in mathematics and music, and their achievement was examined.
- The impact of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning was evaluated.
- The extent to which leadership at middle level has developed and contributes to the school's capacity to improve was investigated.

Information about the school

Up Holland is a slightly smaller than average-size secondary school where almost all students are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is half the national average. The school has specialist status in music, mathematics and computing.

When the school was inspected in May 2010 it was judged to require significant improvement in relation to students' achievement, the quality of teaching, leadership and management.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. It is providing a satisfactory education for its students.

The headteacher's drive and passion for improving the school have been pivotal in the progress made since the previous inspection. Her clearly articulated, long-term vision has been translated into carefully targeted strategies for embedding the improvements required. These are bearing some fruit. Attainment is broadly average and students' achievement is satisfactory overall. Although unvalidated GCSE results for 2011 indicate a dip in outcomes in English, concerted efforts to raise attainment in mathematics paid dividends with the school's best ever results in this subject. There was a substantial rise in results in music, one of the school's specialist areas. Additionally, across the range of subjects there was a significant increase in the proportion of students gaining the highest GCSE grades.

The quality of teaching, which is satisfactory overall, is improving as a consequence of a systematic approach to developing teachers' repertoire of classroom skills. Students make satisfactory progress overall but an increasing proportion of lessons are at least good, and in such lessons students' progress is accelerating. A key feature of the better teaching is an accurate grasp of the levels at which students are working and the next steps needed to move their learning on. Where assessment is less secure, teaching is not as sharply focused and this inhibits students' progress. Planning does not always reflect the sequential steps in learning, both over time and in individual lessons, acutely enough. The identification of suitable strategies to support the learning of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable so, although their progress is satisfactory overall, it is uneven as they move through the school.

Students' personal development is good. They are polite, courteous and treat others with respect. Their levels of attendance are high. The care, guidance and support for students are good, particularly so for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Beyond school, almost all continue with education or training.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's relentless focus on improving students' achievement rightly provides the basis for structuring the roles of leaders at all levels. Middle leadership, previously identified as a weakness, has

improved. Middle leaders are stepping up to the plate. They have received pertinent training and support to equip them with the skills and understanding needed to fulfil their responsibilities. New arrangements for the leadership of each year group helpfully focus on ensuring that all students make the progress of which they are capable. The governing body has a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development and provides an increasingly detailed level of challenge to the school's leaders. The strides the school has made in the areas identified by the previous inspection demonstrate that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Improve students' achievement by:
 - raising attainment across the curriculum and particularly in English
 - accelerating learning by improving the quality of teaching
 - increasing the accuracy of assessments to promote better progress in lessons and over time
 - consistently matching strategies to the needs of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to support their learning more effectively
 - ensuring that progression in learning over time and in individual lessons is planned for effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

When students join the school their attainment is broadly average. They make satisfactory progress, so that by the end of Key Stage 4 their attainment remains broadly average. There are no marked variations in the performance of groups of students, although progress for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is uneven. Students' good behaviour and positive attitudes make a significant contribution to their satisfactory learning. Lessons are characterised by good relationships. Students listen very well in class, collaborate effectively in pairs and groups, and apply themselves diligently to tasks. They readily take responsibility for their learning. Students' preparation for the next stage of their life is satisfactory overall; strengths in their personal development are tempered by their broadly average attainment in English and mathematics.

Students say school is somewhere they feel very safe and this is borne out by their high levels of attendance. They make a good contribution to school life and gain leadership experience, for instance, as prefects, sports captains and school councillors. Their views are taken into account, for example, when the junior leadership team reports to the governing body. Students also make a good contribution to the local community through a wide range of sporting activities, charitable fundraising and performances by the very well-regarded band. Students

have a well-developed understanding of the choices involved in leading a healthy lifestyle. They have influenced the selection of healthy foods available at lunchtimes. In addition, a significant proportion engages in extra-curricular sport both at school and beyond. There are evident strengths in students' moral and social development: their spiritual and cultural development is comparatively weaker.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The school's determined efforts to improve teaching are having a positive impact. The proportion of good or better lessons is rising and there is no longer any inadequate teaching. The best lessons thoroughly engage students through a range of fast-paced activities, sharply targeted on the next steps in learning. Students know what they are learning, and why, and relish the challenge to reach new heights. Where teaching is less successful, the pace is slower and some lessons are dull. The emphasis on target levels is not accompanied by fine-tuned assessments of precisely what students already know and can do and what their next small steps in learning should be. Hence, activities are not always precisely matched to students' needs, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is too early to gauge the impact of recent promising changes at Key Stage 4, founded on a careful evaluation of students' needs. Provision at Key Stage 4 for potentially vulnerable students is well-matched to their requirements. Across the school, there is good take-up of the broad range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities, with sporting and musical activities featuring prominently. The school provides good care, guidance and support for students. A new leadership system reflects the school's increasing emphasis on securing not only students' well-being, but also their academic progress. Good arrangements are in place to ensure a smooth transition into Year 7: students say they are settling in well. A broad range of partnerships with external agencies helps the school to meet the specific needs of potentially vulnerable students well. Measures to reduce persistent absence have proved very successful.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's open and dynamic leadership has been instrumental in setting high expectations for the school and gradually gaining the commitment of staff to the improvements needed. Self-evaluation is accurate and an appropriate leadership structure has been put in place to meet the school's priorities. The drive to improve teaching and learning, notably the work of the critical difference team, has had a positive impact on classroom practice. Staff are being held to account for the performance of students. Middle leaders are now playing an appropriate part in the systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Regular tracking of students' progress towards their targets contributes to this, although increased accuracy in assessments is needed in some instances.

Governance is satisfactory overall. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. There are effective systems in place to ensure that the governing body is well-informed about the school's work and progress. A discrete committee has rigorously tracked the school's progress on the issues identified by the previous inspection and provided considerable challenge to the senior leadership team. The school takes suitable steps to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities. Outcomes for the most able have improved but progress is less consistent for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school has a varied range of partnerships, including some contributing to the professional development of staff. Links with local high schools have been influential in helping to improve the quality of teaching. The school shares expertise and resources with local primary schools through its specialist subjects as well as through sporting links. Engagement with parents and carers is good. Liaison with parents and carers of potentially vulnerable students is a particular strength. Information about school life is shared regularly through the school newspaper. Review days and termly reports keep parents and carers abreast of their child's progress. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There are many links with the local community and a long standing partnership with a school in Germany. However, the school lacks a strategic approach to ensuring that students' understanding and experience of the diversity of Britain as well as wider global issues are extended.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers completed the inspection questionnaire. Areas of concern, such as behaviour and the extent to which students adopt healthy lifestyles were investigated and are commented on in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Up Holland 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 **161** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 776 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	32	98	61	8	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	34	105	65	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	27	95	59	11	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	18	99	61	13	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	26	16	104	65	13	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	19	86	53	27	17	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	12	97	60	23	14	3	2
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)	39	24	92	57	12	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	17	111	69	8	5	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	20	91	57	14	9	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	16	95	59	14	9	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	49	30	90	56	8	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	32	92	57	8	5	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



16 September 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Up Holland High School, Wigan, WN5 7AL

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. The discussions we had with a number of you, including the junior leadership team, as well as the questionnaires some of you completed, helped us to reach our judgement that your school no longer requires a notice to improve. It is providing you with a satisfactory education.

Some things have improved since the previous inspection, including attainment in mathematics, the number of high GCSE grades achieved in the recent examinations and the way you learn in lessons. We were pleased to see that you behave well and treat each other with respect. Your positive attitudes to learning help you to make progress. You make a good contribution to the school and local community, for instance as prefects, school councillors, band members and in sports' teams. You are to be congratulated on your high levels of attendance.

As you know from your own work, there is always room for improvement so we have asked your headteacher and the staff to ensure that:

- you achieve more by reaching higher standards in all subjects and particularly in English
- teaching and the rate at which your learn improves further
- the assessment of your learning is as accurate as possible so lessons are sharply targeted on what you need to learn next
- the strategies used to help those of you who find learning difficult are consistently matched to your learning needs
- courses and lessons are carefully planned to help you develop your learning in manageable steps.

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Austin
Her Majesty's Inspector

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