

Selby High School Specialist School for the Arts and Science

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121702
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380307
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Maddison 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	1,111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	G Gibson
Headteacher	P M Eckersley
Date of previous school inspection	04 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons and 35 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, senior staff, middle leaders, classroom teachers, members of the governing body, and the school's former School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a variety of documents provided by the school, including policies, data analyses, and the school's self-evaluation. They also looked at students' books. They analysed 320 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as the questionnaires completed by 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 achievement of all students, particularly in English.
- Whether the quality of teaching is good enough, the use of assessment information effective enough, and the curriculum appropriate enough to raise achievement and promote high outcomes for all students.
- The contribution of partnerships and specialist status to school improvement.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in driving up attainment and improving outcomes for all groups of learners.

Information about the school

Selby High School is an average-sized secondary school. There are more girls than boys. Most students are of White British heritage. Whereas the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average, the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of those with a statement of special educational needs is both below average. The school has had specialist status in the arts since 2005 and it was granted a second specialism in science in 2011.

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

2

Main findings

Selby High School is a satisfactory and improving school; it has a significant number of good features. Senior leaders and the governing body are clearly focused on equipping students with skills and aspirations to succeed in adult life. As a result, students have positive attitudes to school, their attendance is above average, their behaviour is good, and they enjoy their learning. They feel safe, cared for and valued. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent reflected the views of the vast majority who responded to the questionnaire, when writing, 'This school encourages a warm and caring atmosphere where the children support each other; my children have thrived here'.

Achievement is satisfactory and it is improving. Since the last inspection, results in national examinations at the end of Key Stage 4 show that overall standards are rising. The proportion of students achieving five subjects, including English and mathematics at the higher grades, rose from 47% in 2010 to 56% in 2011. This was the best result on this performance measure in the school's history and was due particularly to a marked improvement in results in mathematics. However, this promising picture has not been replicated in all curriculum areas. An analysis of attainment data and evidence from students' books and lessons reveal some inconsistency of performance across subjects. In effect, some students are not making sufficient progress in all their subjects and more students could attain higher standards. The school is working hard to address the weaker aspects of students' performance across the curriculum. Focused intervention by the 'AIM' team is helping to support students in danger of underachieving and more accurate systems for monitoring progress and attainment are in place. The current analysis of students' academic performance across the curriculum indicates that more students are on track to achieve their targets and that results at GCSE are likely to be better in 2012 than they were in 2011.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, it is improving, due mainly to the effective work of the Teaching and Learning Team in disseminating good practice. Inspectors observed examples of good and outstanding teaching and this provides an effective basis for the school to move forward. However, teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all students make good progress in their lessons. In the best lessons observed, students made good or outstanding progress because expectations were high, learning was challenging and work matched the needs of all students. However, such effective practice is not universal. In the

lessons where least progress was made, teaching failed to engage students sufficiently. This was because the level of challenge was too low and did not meet the needs of all students. Furthermore, in these least successful lessons, there were not enough opportunities for students to work independently. The school has established effective systems for tracking and evaluating students' academic performance. However, this data is not being used consistently by all teachers to plan lessons and create activities which are closely aligned to students' individual needs and academic targets.

Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders undertake their roles effectively. They have a focused agenda and, with the governing body, are giving clear strategic direction on the school's key priorities. Accurate self-evaluation, clear improvement plans, effective measures to improve teaching and raise attainment, and increasingly strong leadership at all levels indicate that the school has good capacity to improve.

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?

- Ensure that all students make better progress by:
 - raising standards of attainment across the curriculum
 - establishing a greater consistency of performance between different subjects.

- Improve further the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that there is greater expectation and challenge in all lessons
 - using assessment information more precisely to create learning activities that are more closely aligned to students' individual needs and academic targets
 - ensuring more opportunities in lessons for students to develop as independent learners.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students enter the school with attainment which is broadly average and they make satisfactory progress in their learning. In some lessons they make good progress. In these lessons, learning is challenging and work matches the range of abilities present. As a result, students are motivated and engaged. However, in too many lessons progress is not fast enough. In these lessons, weaker teaching does not consider the needs of all students. There was also too much 'teacher talk' and insufficient opportunities were provided for students to become independent learners. Furthermore in those lessons where expectations were too low, students became passive and their behaviour started to falter as they became less focused. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. However, some underachieve, though the school is working hard to

improve their progress and that of other groups, for example, potentially vulnerable students.

Students say they feel safe, that there is little bullying and any that occurs is dealt with effectively and quickly. They appreciate the opportunities to be involved in sport, both beyond and within the curriculum, and they can explain why and how they should lead a healthy lifestyle. Students make a good contribution to the school and the wider community, including through the house structure, which is successfully promoting student engagement. They are being well prepared for their future beyond the classroom, not least because of their positive outlook, their willingness to work hard, and their above average and improving attendance. The school’s specialism is having a considerable impact upon enhancing students’ wider curricular experiences and in improving outcomes both within the specialist subjects and increasingly across other subjects.

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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school is rightly proud of the care, guidance and support it provides for its students and the provision for potentially vulnerable students is a notable strength. Good arrangements are in place to ease the transition between one phase of education and the next. The good curriculum has been carefully adjusted to meet the needs of students. Nevertheless, the school is aware of the importance of reviewing its curricular provision on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the students. The provision is enhanced through effective local partnership arrangements and through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities.

While the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, inspectors observed teaching which was good and some that was outstanding. Good or better teaching is characterised by well-planned lessons, which include a range of activities that match the needs of all students. High expectations, an appropriate level of challenge, and

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

the skilful use of assessment information to plan appropriate learning activities help the students in these lessons to make at least good progress. However, such effective practice is not yet embedded fully across the school.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school benefits from the highly effective leadership of the headteacher and the well-focused senior team. Senior leaders are ambitious as shown in the challenging targets they set for the school. There is an awareness of where intervention is needed, effective strategies to support students in their learning are being implemented, and there is an understanding of what needs to be done to take the school forward. Middle leaders are being held to account and are very supportive of the headteacher's vision for the school. Staffing deficiencies have been tackled and staff morale is high. There is a positive climate for learning, and there is a willingness to embrace strategies which will further strengthen teaching and subsequently, improve students' achievement. In these ways the leadership team has shown that it has the capacity to embed ambition and drive forward improvement.

Safeguarding arrangements are good and leaders and managers ensure that all staff are well informed about child protection policies and procedures. Equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled well. However, too much variation exists between different groups of learners in some subjects. The school knows its own and the local community well and this makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. Governance is good; the governing body takes an active role in the life of the school and use its wealth of knowledge and experience to support and challenge school leaders at all levels.

These are the grades for the 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	2
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	3

Views of parents and carers

A higher-than-average percentage of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and the large majority responded positively to most statements. A number of parents and carers who responded added written comments. Most parents and carers report the school keeps their children safe and greatly appreciate the level of pastoral care which is provided. However, some who responded raised concerns about poor behaviour and the variable quality of teaching in lessons. The inspection team investigated these concerns carefully and their judgements are reflected in appropriate sections of this report. Inspectors consider that the school works hard to engage with parents and carers and to inform them about their children's progress. However, the school recognises that it must persist in finding more effective ways of taking into account the suggestions and concerns expressed by parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Selby High School Specialist School for the Arts 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 320 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,111 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	112	35	180	56	12	4	7	2
The school keeps my child safe	107	33	189	59	12	4	4	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	105	33	185	58	15	5	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	95	30	184	58	18	6	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	88	28	202	63	10	3	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	73	23	204	64	24	8	4	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	21	212	66	27	8	3	1
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)	82	26	196	61	14	4	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	82	26	202	63	15	5	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	94	29	176	55	28	9	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	69	22	176	55	38	12	8	3
The school is led and managed effectively	125	39	166	52	9	3	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	126	39	164	51	16	5	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

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.



7 October 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Selby High School Specialist School for the Arts and Science, Selby, YO8 4HT

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We greatly appreciated the time you spent talking to us and we found your comments very helpful. As well as coming into lessons and looking at your work, we read the questionnaires completed by you and your parents and carers.

We came to your school to find out what was going well and what could be improved. You attend a satisfactory and improving school, which has a significant number of good features. Staff care for you well, and the good care, guidance and support you receive help to support your academic and personal development. Your school is well led by the headteacher and all those who make decisions. You told us that you feel safe and that your views are valued. Your behaviour is good, your attendance is above average, and you have positive attitudes to learning.

You can do even better; so we have asked the headteacher, the governing body and your teachers to continue the work they are doing to help you achieve as well as you can and gain better results in examinations. We have also asked them to ensure that you can achieve the best results possible in all the subjects you study and to focus on a number of priorities, which include making sure that:

- you are given work which is challenging and which is matched to your needs
- your teachers use the assessment information they have about each of you to guide them more closely in planning lessons and work for you
- you are given more opportunities in lessons to work independently.

The headteacher and senior leaders are determined to improve your school and the teachers are working hard on your behalf. However, you have your part to play and you can certainly help your teachers with some of these things by coming to school regularly and working to the best of your ability.

We very much enjoyed visiting your school and I would like to thank you once again for being so friendly and polite. I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,
Michael Maddison
Her Majesty's Inspector

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