



# Werneth School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106136  
**LEA** Stockport  
**Inspection number** 277496  
**Inspection dates** 24 January 2006 to 25 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Jane Austin HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Harrytown
<b>School category</b>	Community		Romiley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3BX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 494 1222
<b>Number on roll</b>	1323	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 494 1397
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr A Holt
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Campbell

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 24 January 2006 - 25 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277496
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors accompanied by four additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Werneth is a comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years. With 1,323 pupils on roll, it is much larger than most schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. A new headteacher took up post in September 2005.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that Werneth School requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required because the standards pupils reach are well below the national average and their rate of progress is significantly lower than average.

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory because the recently appointed headteacher is providing dynamic and incisive leadership. She has rapidly got to grips with the improvements required and motivated staff effectively to address these. A number of rigorous systems have been introduced that provide the tools to make the necessary changes: for instance, by identifying underachievement and ensuring that teaching meets the pupils' needs. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall although a significant minority of pupils do not engage with learning enthusiastically and actively. Support for the most vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The behaviour of most pupils is satisfactory but a small minority disrupt learning in some lessons. When moving around the school pupils show too little consideration for others. Pupils study an appropriate range of subjects and have the opportunity to follow work related courses at Key Stage 4. Extracurricular activities, particularly those linked to sport and the performing arts, are wide ranging and popular.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards throughout the school.
- Embed systems across the school to assess pupils' performance and rigorously track their achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to good overall.
- Establish a system that provides effective support and guidance for pupils' learning and their personal development.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Pupils' attainment on entry in Year 7 fluctuates but is generally well below average. By Year 11 pupils' standards and achievement are inadequate when compared with their starting point.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 3. Despite this, by the end of Year 9 standards in the core subjects are well below the national average and have been at this level for a number of years. In 2005 school targets were met in English but not in mathematics and science.

Progress slows as pupils move through Key Stage 4; achievement is not as good as it should be. There are variations between subjects, but by the end of Year 11 standards

are well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who gain five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) passes at grades A\* to C is well below average and the percentage gaining at least five GCSE passes is low. There has been a declining trend in results for some years. Nevertheless, in 2005 pupils' achievements in art and design, performing arts and German were above the national picture and show what is possible. In 2005 the school did not meet its targets. Targets for 2006 are not sufficiently well founded on a secure analysis of individual pupils' performance; the school confirms that it is unlikely that these will be met.

The considerable variation in the progress pupils make throughout the school is the result of inconsistencies in teaching as well as instability in staffing. The lack of a robust system, throughout the school, to assess pupils' capabilities and track their performance means that underachievement is not identified and addressed systematically.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and they make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. They achieve well in developing their basic skills in relation to their specific needs and disabilities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Assemblies contribute effectively to this but form periods are not used well enough to encourage pupils to behave sensibly and take responsibility for their learning. Pupils have too little formal experience of Britain's cultural diversity. Many pupils value their opportunities to contribute to school life, for example, through the school council. Members enjoyed their involvement in recent staff appointments. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in the school's theatrical productions and their involvement in sporting activities reflects a positive approach to a healthy lifestyle. These activities help pupils develop a suitable level of workplace skills such as teamworking, but their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) require improvement.

Overall, behaviour is satisfactory and improving as a result of the introduction of a clear, staged system of rewards and sanctions. Nonetheless, pupils and parents who raised concerns about behaviour are justified in doing so. A small minority of pupils engage in low level disruption in lessons and the conduct in corridors between lessons and at break times is rowdy. While pupils' attitudes to learning are generally satisfactory, there are considerable variations. Many have a passive approach to learning but engage positively in subjects where tasks are practical and active.

Although the school has suitable systems for promoting attendance, it remains below the national average. Attendance in lessons is not checked consistently and too many pupils are late for their classes.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Inspectors confirm the school's evaluation of teaching as being satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in both key stages and there is a significant amount of teaching that has strong features. However, the spread of these strengths is uneven and so the quality of lessons varies. In outstanding lessons the teacher has infectious enthusiasm and this is reflected in the way pupils enjoy their work and sustain interest and concentration. Such lessons are thoroughly prepared, use a variety of approaches and employ the national strategy for promoting teaching and learning. In these and good quality lessons, the positive relationship between teachers and pupils results in a purposeful atmosphere so that pupils make at least good progress. Skilful questioning leads to pupils having a good understanding of their work and they are actively involved in the development of ideas. In less effective and lack-lustre lessons the teachers dominate and provide limited opportunities for pupils to explain or reflect on their learning. Questioning does not involve a wide enough number of pupils and consequently their levels of progress and interest are diminished. In the small number of weaker lessons, usually in the sets comprised of lower attaining pupils, the teachers do not have sufficient pupil management skills to meet the needs of a small minority of disruptive pupils.

The use of assessment as a tool for enhancing pupils' learning is in its early stages of development. There are some examples of effective practice but its use is not consistently applied within and across subjects.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school judges the curriculum to be satisfactory and inspectors agree with this. Statutory requirements are met and in Years 7 to 9 pupils study an appropriate range of subjects. A suitable choice of academic and vocational options is offered at Key Stage 4. In addition to more traditional subjects, some applied GCSE courses have been introduced. The well planned Tracks programme offers sufficient opportunities for pupils to access work-based learning and alternative provision which supports the development of essential skills. Helpfully, a further expansion of vocational courses is planned. The delivery of numeracy and literacy across the curriculum does not have sufficient impact on raising standards because it lacks consistency and coherence. The provision of opportunities to develop skills in ICT has been strengthened by recent improvements in facilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well catered for. Those identified as gifted and talented have a broad spectrum of enrichment opportunities to choose from. In addition, a suitable programme is provided to encourage pupils in the Aim Higher group to continue their education at college and beyond.

A strength of the curriculum is the wide range of out-of-school activities to enhance pupils' learning, well-being and enjoyment. These are well attended and supported. There are particular strengths in the performing arts and sports; these are an important aspect of the school's place in the community. Links with the community, partner schools and colleges are satisfactory overall and have been significantly strengthened since September 2005.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils. Particular strengths are the work of the learning support unit which helps to equip pupils who might otherwise be excluded, with the necessary skills to cope in mainstream classes. Additionally, learning mentors offer well targeted support to individual pupils. In conjunction with a suitable range of agencies, the school provides good support for its most vulnerable pupils. Child protection procedures are securely in place and the required checks have been completed. Suitable systems are in place to maintain pupils' safety during school activities. Pupils say that generally they feel safe in school and that incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils receive clear advice about subject choices and future options.

The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting them appropriately challenging targets are new and at the very early stages of implementation. Although some pupils know how well they are doing in a few subjects, most do not know their current levels of attainment, what they should be aiming for or how they could improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. However, the leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is energetic and well focused. She has articulated clearly a vision for the school's improvement and rapidly gained the commitment of staff to this. Issues such as the management of pupils' behaviour have been addressed with urgency, signalling learning and a suitable climate for it, as central to the school's mission. An astute analysis of the school's priorities has resulted in carefully staged plans and the establishment of some of the systems needed to achieve these. For instance, new procedures for quality assuring subject provision are comprehensive and rigorous, demanding a range of skills which most subject leaders are not fully competent in. New links between the strengthened senior leadership team and curriculum areas are increasing the accountability of staff for pupils' progress. Well considered plans are in place to extend this further by including tracking pupils' progress within the remit of heads of year. Helpfully, the school recognises training for middle leaders as a priority and an appropriate programme is underway. As the school moves through a period of rapid change and reappraisal, there are inconsistencies in the implementation of new policies and considerable variance in the quality of provision. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing some of the issues raised by the last inspection, although the effective use of assessment information remains an area urgently in need of development.

The governing body is providing satisfactory leadership for the school. Suitable committee structures are in place to address the school's business efficiently and relevant training has taken place. The involvement of governors has increased recently; the quality of the information provided to them has improved and is good. However, it is not being used fully to challenge the school.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Following our recent visit to your school, we would like to thank all of you who helped us during the inspection. We would also like to tell you what we found. We have decided to give your school something called a Notice to Improve. We believe it is important that you understand what this means, what we are asking the school to do over the coming year and, most importantly, how you can help.

A notice to improve means that although your school does some things well, in some important areas there are weaknesses that need to be put right. The main reasons we believe the school needs to improve are:

- you do not achieve GCSE results which are as good as they should be
- your attendance is not good enough and too many of you arrive late to lessons; this is having a bad effect on your learning and progress
- a small number of you behave badly in lessons and this sometimes stops you and your classmates learning.

We have asked the school to improve by:

- raising standards so you get better exam results
- making sure teachers monitor how well you are learning, set you challenging targets and check whether you reach them
- making learning as interesting as possible
- helping you all to behave well, attend regularly and arrive on time.

It is important to stress that there are many good things about your school. For example, the adults in your school work hard to care for you, to treat you fairly and to deal with any problems you take to them. We were very pleased to hear about all the sporting activities and teams you have and the wonderful performances you do.

We believe that the school can improve quickly with your help. Inspectors will return next year to find out how well you are doing.