



# Silverdale School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107128  
**LEA** Sheffield  
**Inspection number** 277714  
**Inspection dates** 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Caroline Broomhead HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Bents Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sheffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		South Yorkshire S11 9QH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 236 9991
<b>Number on roll</b>	1250	<b>Fax number</b>	0114 236 9991
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr J Mordecai
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs H Storey

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 December 2005 - 8 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277714
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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**

Silverdale is an 11-18 comprehensive school serving the south-west of Sheffield. Most pupils are white British and come from more affluent local areas, with a smaller than usual number from areas of high social deprivation. A small proportion of pupils have free school meals. Just over one in ten pupils speak English as an additional language. A similar proportion have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is lower than average. The school has specialist provision for seventeen pupils who are profoundly deaf. When pupils join the school at eleven their attainment is above average, although more recently this has changed and is broadly average. In September 2005, the school was designated a specialist language college. The school is popular locally and is over-subscribed. The sixth form is larger than average and has collaborative arrangements with two other sixth forms in Sheffield.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors judge that Silverdale is a good school with some outstanding features, rather than outstanding overall which the school judged itself to be. The pupils reach standards which are well above average and, in some respects, outstanding. In relation to their attainment on entry to the school, the pupils make good progress in their learning and they achieve well; boys' progress is outstanding. The school is now identifying those groups of pupils who are not achieving as well as others. Attendance is excellent.

The headteacher and senior leaders provide clear direction for improvement. They accurately recognise that the quality of teaching and learning are good overall and could be improved further. Middle managers are increasingly taking responsibility for quality and standards in their departments. The school has exciting plans to take forward its work as a specialist language college and has set suitably challenging targets to reach higher standards.

Very good induction arrangements result in pupils quickly settling in and enjoying their new school. The pupils have high academic aspirations and the vast majority choose to stay on into the sixth form. Parents are generally supportive of the school.

The accommodation is overcrowded and in a poor state of repair; the school is awaiting a new building. However, the school does not pay sufficient attention to ensuring that high standards of hygiene, cleanliness and safe working practices are achieved, with the result that there is a general absence of pride in the environment. Finances are generally well managed, although some of the teaching and learning resources are in urgent need of replacing. The school provides good value for money.

The school has made good progress in addressing the main issues raised at the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a strong sense of community in the sixth form and mutual respect between teachers and students. Leadership is very effective and enthusiastic and ensures a high quality of guidance and support for students. Thorough procedures are in place to support and guide students in preparation for when they leave. Students are positive, mature and confident and their attitudes to study are generally exemplary. This is reflected in their obvious enjoyment in lessons and contributes to consistently well above average standards and good achievement. This is further exemplified in the high rate of participation in enrichment activities. Retention rates are high and the vast majority successfully complete their two-year courses.

Students act responsibly and are effectively involved in a range of activities that contribute to the well-being of younger students. Activities include listening to pupils reading and twenty sixth-formers have received formal training to support this activity.

These positive features are in spite of the severely limited and poor quality sixth form accommodation.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the proportion of teaching and learning which is good or outstanding.
- Embed across the school the procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work.
- Make more consistent use of pupil performance data to track the progress of all groups of pupils and to better inform teaching and learning.
- Improve standards of hygiene and care in the school environment.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils arrive at the school with above average test results. In Year 9 they gain well above average results in the national tests; achievement across Years 7 to 9 in 2004 was outstanding. In 2005 the majority of pupils gained significantly above average standards with the relative exception of lower ability girls and higher ability boys. Over the last three years, test results have been exceptionally high by comparison with the national average.

General certificate of secondary education results are also exceptionally high. Pupils in English and mathematics do extremely well and made outstanding progress in 2004. Although results overall declined in 2004, they have improved again in 2005, almost returning to the standards reached in 2003. The school narrowly missed its GCSE targets in 2004 and 2005.

In relation to their attainment at the end of Year 9, pupils' achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good, with boys generally making greater progress than girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable groups are also making good progress.

Overall, pupils' achievement from when they enter the school in Year 7 to the end of Year 11 is good.

In 2004 standards in the sixth form were well above average and this represented very good achievement for these students. However, in 2005 results fell slightly with female students gaining higher results than males. Overall, students make good progress in relation to their attainment on entry to the sixth form.

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

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils like coming to school as reflected by their outstanding attendance. Pupils enjoy lessons particularly where they are actively involved in peer and self assessment. Relationships are good and this is shown by the good behaviour and positive attitudes

in most lessons. The behaviour of students in the sixth form was excellent and demonstrated their mature attitude towards school. Older pupils feel well prepared for the next stage of their education.

A comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, together with citizenship and a very rich programme of out of school activities, underpins the pupils' good moral and social development. Cultural education is exceptionally strong within the school with regular multi-cultural evenings for pupils and parents and many visits to local heritage centres. Pupils willingly exercise responsibility and this continues into the sixth form when the students are used to fill the dinner time supervisory roles in the canteen. All pupils take part in many fund raising events and help to decide which charities will benefit. Opportunities for spiritual development are relatively weaker.

The school promotes pupils' academic and social welfare and inclusiveness well and as a result the pupils feel cared for. The seventeen profoundly deaf pupils in the unit are integrated into mainstream classes for a significant amount of their time.

Pupils take opportunities to express their views. For example, the school council meets regularly to talk about issues such as 'healthy eating options' with the canteen manager. In response to their request, the quadrangle was partially covered over to protect the dinner queues in wet weather. A few pupils have not developed a clear understanding of how to stay safe, for example, when they sit on benches during lessons and push down the stair ways between lessons.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know their subjects well and this, combined with a commitment to help pupils improve, contributes well to the best lessons. Those pupils with additional needs, including the profoundly deaf, are well supported. Where teaching is outstanding, teachers skilfully sequence learning so that it becomes progressively more challenging, which encourages pupils to make bold and speculative answers. The planning is very effective and teachers cater very well for the differences in the way pupils learn. Information and communication technology (ICT) and other resources are used to good effect.

Shortcomings in satisfactory lessons include an over-reliance on teachers talking too much and, therefore, a lack of participation on the part of pupils. Sometimes, pupils' understanding is not checked sufficiently in lessons, so that teachers do not know well enough whether all pupils have the right level of challenge. Pupils contribute a great deal to lessons when the opportunities arise, but teaching does not always capitalise sufficiently on the prior knowledge of learners. Generally pupils enjoy their work and are keen to be challenged, but in satisfactory lessons they become only 'absorbers of knowledge', rather than active learners solving problems or challenging received wisdom.

The quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form is good. Lessons are challenging and this helps students to make good progress. Some make very thoughtful contributions and take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The school provides pupils in Years 7 to 11 with a good and improving curriculum. A good range of courses in Years 10 and 11 enables students to follow programmes that are tailored to meet their individual needs so that all pupils gain recognised qualifications. Opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum are not commonplace. Work-related learning is promoted in most subjects, and particularly in business studies, modern foreign languages and design and technology. An expanding involvement of the business community and parents is used well to promote enterprise activities. The award of specialist college status has increased the range of modern foreign language choices and this is reflected in the significantly higher involvement of students. There are strong connections with other institutions. These enhance provision and enable students to confidently deal with transition arrangements at all key stages. Students take advantage of a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The sixth form curriculum is outstanding. In addition to an extensive range of subjects, an enrichment programme gives students the opportunity to take part in activities ranging from studying Mandarin to gaining a community sports leadership award.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good overall. Procedures for dealing with child protection issues and minor medical problems are robust. However, parents and pupils share the view that the school's level of cleanliness needs to improve and the inspectors agree with this. Toilets, food technology rooms and the gym area are particular areas for concern. Although the accommodation is overcrowded, the school's hygiene practices are not good enough. Many of the wall displays throughout the school look old and tired and do not mirror pupils' achievements well.

Through the good support and guidance they receive, the pupils are generally aware of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Links with parents are satisfactory, but some parents feel that communication between the home and school is poor and that their views are not always taken into consideration.

Older pupils receive good guidance when choosing options and making career and university choices. A comprehensive work-related learning programme is in place.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

While the school evaluates leadership and management as outstanding, inspectors judge them as good. The headteacher leads the school well. She has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, along with the senior leadership team and governors, sets the strategic direction, which is well communicated with staff. The school improvement plan is a major vehicle in moving the school forward because it identifies the key priorities and involves a contribution from all departments to achieve them.

The senior leadership team has a good grasp of its areas of responsibility and is implementing a robust process for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. It is in the early stages of becoming established and has not yet agreed clear targets for increasing the proportion of teaching which is either good or outstanding. Middle managers speak confidently and enthusiastically about their roles in reviewing the effectiveness and progress in their departments and of developing the teaching and learning. Their work is beginning to pay dividends, as seen in the way pupils' attainment and achievement is analysed and work planned accordingly.

Since the last inspection the school has improved its provision of ICT. In addition, the focus on professional development has resulted in teachers having a greater understanding of the different ways pupils learn, so that pupils can take more control of their learning. However, this is still in its early stages and not universal throughout the school. Strategic planning and pupil target setting have also improved.

The school manages its finances and resources well even though its accommodation is poor and potentially detrimental to pupils' personal development and to the well-being of staff. It gives good value for money.



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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>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<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>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<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**

Thank you for welcoming the Ofsted inspection team into your school earlier this week. Many of you gave your time to talk with us and let us know your views and this was appreciated.

These are our main findings from the inspection:

- you reach very high standards in your tests and examinations and can be proud of your good achievements
- the teaching is good overall, and some of it is outstanding. You rightly say that this outstanding teaching motivates you to learn better
- the headteacher and senior staff lead the school well and have a clear view about how it can improve further
- the curriculum is good, and outstanding in the sixth form. You tell us that you particularly enjoy all the enrichment activities which are available to you
- your involvement with the local and international community is a real strength of the school
- your behaviour around school is generally good, but sometimes you are not as safety conscious as you could be, particularly in the workshops and on the stairs
- you and your parents are rightly concerned about the poor hygiene and cleanliness around the school. You could help to improve this by putting litter in the bins provided as well as taking more care to reduce clutter with your bags and coats.

The main points which the staff and governors need to attend to are:

- improve the teaching so that you all make even better progress and do as well as you can
- ensure teachers use the information about your previous achievements to track your progress carefully and to plan lessons which will interest and challenge you
- ensure that procedures for checking on the quality of the school's work become routine and involve everybody
- improve the standards of hygiene and cleanliness around the school.

Once again, thank you for your support with this inspection. We wish you every success for the future.