



Handsworth Grange School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107148
LEA Sheffield
Inspection number 277718
Inspection dates 20 February 2006 to 21 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Tony Thornley CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Handsworth Grange Road
School category	Community		Handsworth
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Sheffield, South Yorkshire S13 9HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 269 4801
Number on roll	1029	Fax number	0114 2692832
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Janet Jenkinson
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr Stephen Burnage

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Handsworth Grange School serves communities in the south east of Sheffield. Whilst there is significant deprivation in some of these areas, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is at the national average. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds. The largest minority ethnic group is of Pakistani heritage and some of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The ability range of pupils entering the school is just below the national average and is gradually improving. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school became a specialist sports college in 2001. In the last year there have been extensive changes in the school's staff at all levels. The current headteacher has been in post, initially as acting head, since April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Handsworth Grange School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school, incorrectly, evaluates itself to be better than this. It offers satisfactory value for money but has significant room for improvement. Pupils attain below average standards but make adequate progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. The specialist status of the school is having a positive impact in some areas of the school's work. However, it has yet to have a significant influence on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory but their attendance is below average. The curriculum is good and the range and quality of activities outside school is very good. The school cares for its pupils satisfactorily, ensures that they are safe and that they are prepared well for their future education and careers. Staff are skilled at identifying pupils' learning needs but they are less effective at providing guidance to help all pupils to achieve as well as they should.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, and the leadership of the headteacher is particularly effective. The headteacher has a clear vision and an accurate understanding of what needs to be done. He and his senior managers recognise that they have not been sufficiently robust in evaluating how well the school is actually doing. They are also aware that the school's progress since the previous inspection has, until recently, been too slow. Recent developments, particularly in improving behaviour and the monitoring of teaching, demonstrate that the school now has sufficient capacity to improve.

The views of staff, pupils and parents are sought and usually acted upon. There are good links with other organisations and the local community, through the school's specialist work, which provide additional support and opportunities for pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

The school should ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress by:

- improving their attendance and punctuality
- setting them challenging targets, which they understand and know how to achieve
- making sure it has an honest and accurate picture of how it is performing and using it to determine its priorities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils arrive at the school with standards that are generally slightly below the national average. They make satisfactory progress through Years 7 to 9 but their test results at the end of Year 9 are below the national average. Results in all the Year 9 tests improved between 2004 and 2005 and the school met its 2005 targets.

Progress slows in Years 10 and 11 and is only just adequate. It was not as good for the 2005 Year 11 as it had been for the 2004 group. General certificate of secondary education (GCSE) results are below average overall although the proportion of pupils gaining five or more passes at grades A* to G matches the national average. The school did not meet its whole school specialist target in 2005 but did meet its targets for physical education and for information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with limited English make better progress than other groups because they receive effective support that helps to improve their learning. In GCSE examinations in 2005, pupils did better in science, media studies, drama, geography and mathematics, than they did on average across all their subjects. They did worse in art and design, English literature, French and history.

The leadership team identified significant under-achievement among Year 11 pupils at the beginning of this school year. They introduced a range of measures, including mentoring pupils and providing more opportunities for some pupils to achieve qualifications. These pupils are now achieving satisfactorily but their progress is still restricted by weaknesses in their recall of earlier topics, a tendency to be too relaxed and a reluctance to make a real effort in their work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils is satisfactory. Many pupils say that they enjoy school and that they feel safe and secure; a member of the school council said, 'the school has a friendly atmosphere'. In lessons where teaching is interesting and the pace of learning brisk, pupils respond by working and concentrating hard. In less successful lessons, pupils often talk too much and their behaviour is inconsistent. Although the level of pupil exclusions has been high, the school's moves to reduce it are beginning to have an impact. Over the past three years, attendance has gradually declined. Although there are recent signs of a small improvement, levels are still too low. Many pupils regularly arrive late for school.

Most pupils welcome the good opportunities which the school provides to take responsibilities. The school council meets on a regular basis and all pupils in the school can contribute to the agenda. However the council members do not 'chair' and 'minute' their own meetings and this limits their personal development.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Most older pupils progress successfully to further education or training, building on the high quality work experience opportunities and careers advice which the school provides. Extra curricular activities improve pupils' access to sport and help them to understand how to be healthy and to stay healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. No inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection and there were some examples of very good practice. Good monitoring and support procedures have been introduced this year which are helping to raise standards of teaching.

Pupils do best in lessons where teachers explain clearly what they are to learn and regular checks are made on their progress. In these lessons, teaching is enthusiastic, lively and well informed. Pupils participate in a wide range of short, well structured activities which they enjoy. Good behaviour is insisted upon and achieved. An outstanding netball lesson illustrated these features particularly well. Superb planning and involvement of all pupils, for example, in evaluating their own and others' work, led to them making excellent progress.

In weaker lessons, objectives are not always explained or followed up. The lessons lack interest and variety and are not always well matched to the wide range of ability in some classes. Learning is sometimes disrupted by pupils making uncalled-for comments that are not dealt with firmly.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their needs are diagnosed well and their achievements are reviewed regularly. In many lessons, teaching assistants are used effectively to help these pupils and those with limited English. However, teachers are not consistently good at incorporating activities in their lessons which meet the needs of all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Most pupils' work is marked regularly. However, pupils are not always clear about the levels at which they are working, or what they need to do to improve. There is good practice, for example in English and in geography, where targets are shared with pupils and teachers give detailed advice on specific areas to improve. Pupils find this approach helpful in improving their standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school judges its curriculum to be good and inspectors agree. In Years 7 to 9 all pupils follow the required subjects of the national curriculum. In Years 10 and 11 pupils choose from a good range of optional subjects, including several vocational courses. Pupils who are in danger of becoming disaffected follow an alternative curriculum programme which is carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. This, and other curriculum improvements, have yet to have an impact on pupils' GCSE results since they will first be examined in Summer 2006.

All pupils follow programmes which include citizenship and general guidance on following a safe and healthy lifestyle, together with the required elements of sex and

drugs education. Pupils value the tutorial programme, particularly the aspects of careers guidance and advice that it provides. Good careers education, together with work experience and the range of vocational opportunities, prepare pupils well for future employment.

The school's sports specialism has a significant impact on the range of physical education activities provided. Pupils have opportunities to try, for example, trampolining and climbing. The specialist status is also beginning to influence the curriculum in subjects other than physical education itself. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the wide range of extra curricular activities. As one pupil said, and others agreed, 'there is plenty to do'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory overall. Child protection, health and safety and medical support systems are in place. Pupils report that the school deals quickly and effectively with the rare instances of bullying or racism.

School staff and a very wide range of multi-agency professionals provide valuable support to pupils who need extra help. A high level of additional emotional and pastoral care is also provided for a wide range of pupils who have low levels of self esteem. Weekly meetings of social inclusion staff are used well to manage, monitor and review this effective provision.

The school has systems for reviewing and reporting on pupils' academic progress, but they are not as effective as they should be. Pupils are not always sure what their personal targets for improvement are, nor how they will achieve them.

Inspectors agree with pupils' and parents' comments that the current state of pupils' toilets is inadequate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school's leadership is satisfactory. The headteacher has provided clear vision and direction and, with a new leadership team, is beginning to move the school forwards. Staff, pupils and governors all acknowledge that progress is being made. There have been improvements in behaviour, in the curriculum and in the school's planning and monitoring of its work. However many other issues remain to be addressed. Pupils' attendance, punctuality and progress should all be better than they are.

Although the school's leaders know what needs to be done to raise standards, their assessment of the current provision is not robust. They think the school is doing better than it is. This inaccuracy is also evident in some middle leaders' evaluations of their areas of responsibility. The headteacher and his senior colleagues are developing initiatives to address these inconsistencies. They have recently introduced a good system to check on the quality of teaching and to help teachers to improve. Parents' and pupils' views are now regularly consulted and are generally taken account of.

Performance data is beginning to be used to monitor standards at all levels, but it is not yet focused clearly or sharply enough on pupils' progress and potential.

Leaders promote pupils' welfare; vulnerable pupils get good support. The school runs smoothly and resources are used effectively. The school has rightly introduced more rigorous financial systems to manage a projected deficit budget. Until recently, governors have not been well enough informed or been sufficiently involved in resolving the key issues facing the school. They now know what the school needs to do to improve. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities apart from the provision of daily collective worship for all pupils.

Improvement since the last inspection is poor, a legacy of previous weaknesses. However, the new leadership team has the confidence of staff and parents. They have already made useful progress, and have the capacity to improve the school further.

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

My colleagues and I enjoyed meeting many of you when we inspected your school. Those of you we spoke to were kind and courteous. You gave us thoughtful and honest opinions about the school and about your learning which helped us in our work.

We think the school gives you a satisfactory education. The best features are:

- you have a good choice of courses and the opportunity to take part in a very wide range of extra activities
- the headteacher is making good changes to the school, for example, by working with the teachers to improve behaviour
- teachers are working well together to review how good your lessons are and to make them even better
- as a sports college, the school has made good links with the Handsworth community and with other schools.

We have made some recommendations to the school so that you are all able to make the best possible progress. The headteacher and his staff will need your help and support to achieve them. They are:

- to work with you to make sure you attend regularly and get to school on time
- to give you targets which you understand, and to make sure you know what you have to do to achieve them
- to review regularly, carefully and accurately how well the school is doing.

Many of you told us that the toilets in the school are dreadful. We looked and we agree with you. We have asked the school to do what it can to improve the situation. If they are able to provide you with better facilities, please look after them.