



Morley High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108078
LEA Leeds
Inspection number 277895
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Brian Sharples HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Fountain Street
School category	Community		Morley
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 0PD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 253 2952
Number on roll	1484	Fax number	0113 253 1483
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr T Elliot
Date of previous inspection	13 September 1999	Headteacher	Mr J Townsley

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	277895

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Morley High School and Specialist Technology College is a larger than average comprehensive school in south Leeds. There are 1,484 students on roll, which includes 215 in the sixth form. The majority of students come from three wards, two of which have average levels of social and economic deprivation. The attainment of students on entry to the school is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of students entitled to free school meals is above average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is well below the national average. The number of minority ethnic students is well below average at around 6.9%.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school with many good features. It provides good value for money. The headteacher came to the school in 2003, at a time when standards and staff morale were in decline. In a short time he has been the key driver in moving the school forward and bringing about some significant change. For example, behaviour and attendance have improved and standards at Key Stage 4 are rising. The school judged its overall effectiveness as good. However, these improvements have not yet raised the standards and progress made by students to a level which is better than satisfactory.

The majority of students enter the school with attainment levels that are broadly in line with national averages. The overall standard of attainment and progress made by students across all year groups is now satisfactory. However, achievement and standards at Key Stage 3 are not yet high enough. The quality of lessons across the school is varied, but good overall. Not all teachers are consistently matching work or providing sufficient challenge to students of all abilities. Equally, not all teachers deliver exciting lessons. The curriculum is outstanding and provides both innovative courses for students' personal development and learning pathways from 14 to 19. The school has specialist technology status which has impacted on curriculum development, raised standards at Key Stage 4 and improved links with partners in the local community.

The care, guidance, support and personal development of students are all good. Behaviour is good and attendance rates are broadly in line with national averages. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The senior leadership team and governors provide strong leadership and direction. The school's self-evaluation shows that it generally knows its strengths and weaknesses well and the inspectors agree with all but the effectiveness judgement. The governors are supportive of the school and know it well.

Responses from the parents' questionnaire show that they are impressed by the changes which have taken place and believe that the school is heading in the right direction. These are views endorsed by the inspection team. The school has addressed the issues from the previous inspection well. While there remain areas for improvement, the capacity for the school to improve further is very good.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The many strengths and recent improvements in the sixth form have led the school to judge its effectiveness as good overall. However, these improvements have not yet had enough impact on the standards achieved and the progress made by students, which are satisfactory overall. Consequently, inspectors judge the sixth form to be satisfactory overall. Students of all abilities are welcomed into the sixth form providing they are prepared to work hard. Numbers have increased as a result of the excellent range of vocational and academic subjects on offer. Students now regard the sixth form as 'somewhere you go to succeed'. They are keen to work and value the support

they receive from teachers: 'it's the teachers that make the subjects'. Leadership and management are consistently good as demonstrated by a clear, shared vision for getting the best deal for the students and the strong links with outside agencies.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide consistent challenge to students of all abilities to raise their standards and achievement in each key stage.
- Ensure that the liveliness and excitement of teaching seen in the best lessons are evident across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students' achievement and standards are satisfactory. The school keeps comprehensive assessment records which show that achievement is improving and standards are rising in all year groups. It is tackling a legacy of widespread underachievement vigorously and successfully: over the previous three years students made inadequate progress in their achievements from Years 7 to 11.

Students enter the school with standards that are broadly in line with national averages. In 2005 the standards attained in the end of the Year 9 national tests were broadly average in mathematics and science, but below average in English. Results in GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 rose significantly in 2005, but were still below average. Nevertheless, students made satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11 from the comparatively low levels they attained in Year 9. Better teaching and use of assessment has now led to significant improvements in students' attainment and rates of progress over the last year. The school's tracking system shows that students from minority ethnic groups are now making satisfactory progress. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support, ensuring that their rate of progress is in line with their peers. In 2005 the school exceeded its specialist school targets for GCSE A* to C grades, but did not meet all of its specialist subject targets. Standards are broadly average in the sixth form, where progress is satisfactory overall and good in the vocational subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development is good. They like coming to school and their enjoyment is evident from their improving attendance, positive attitudes in class and orderly conduct around the premises. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural values underpin a rapidly developing school ethos. All subject areas contribute to students' personal development, which is further promoted in stimulating theme days. Many students benefit from involvement in extra-curricular activities. Students feel safe, relate well to others and increasingly adopt healthy lifestyles.

In lessons, students listen carefully and confidently ask or answer questions. The school successfully promotes effective relationships, peer mentoring and notions of universal

equality and fairness. Lower attaining students work hard, with good support to overcome literacy or other problems. Students work and socialise well together, with harmonious relations between different groups. Incidences of bullying are infrequent and always promptly resolved.

Attitudes are generally good, as most students are mature and responsible. They appreciate and have firm ideas about maintaining and improving the pleasant school environment. The number of permanent and fixed term exclusions has reduced significantly over the last three years. As they progress through school, students acquire skills and cooperative attitudes that prepare them well for later life and work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There have been a significant number of staff changes in the last two years and inspectors confirm good teaching overall, with a high level of consistency about a shared vision. This is leading to much better student achievement and attainment than was recorded in the 2005 national assessments.

Strengths in teaching include thorough planning and well structured lessons. Often a broad range of learning styles is encouraged and students respond well to the variety of tasks set. There is good use of interactive whiteboards and there are plenty of opportunities for students to work collaboratively. The assessment of students' work is usually thorough, with constructive comments for improvement. In one outstanding lesson observed, there was a great sense of liveliness in the teaching and much to stimulate students' learning. Very good use was made of the school's reward system and the lesson concluded with students describing confidently the progress they had made.

However, the strengths are not yet consistently evident across the whole school. On some occasions students were passive in their learning and the excitement and vitality was not evident in all lessons. Occasionally teachers spent too much time talking and did not always match the work appropriately to students' needs. Students, by contrast, welcome opportunities for debate. As one put it, 'I like to be taught it, not told it'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provided is outstanding. The school has put great effort into developing a curriculum that closely matches students' needs through the introduction of a creative 14 to 19 'curriculum pathways' structure. This is an outstanding feature of the school. Students like the pathways because of the personal learning and equality of treatment they receive. Technology college status has led to greater opportunities for students, including a course in product design, and increased emphasis on vocational courses. The on-site vocational provision for construction and hairdressing and beauty therapy

is outstanding. Year 9 students were seen to take very seriously their interviews for acceptance onto the over-subscribed hairdressing course.

The curriculum has an innovative programme of activities contributing to students' personal development. Students report much interest in the days specifically set aside for a wide range of activities, including issues of health, safety and involvement in the community. The school provides a very good selection of clubs and enrichment activities at lunchtime, and before and after school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's provision for the care, guidance and support for students is good.

Purposeful relationships between staff and students create an inclusive, supportive atmosphere. Many students make strong contributions to the school community. They confidently share concerns with their teachers, buddies and learning mentors.

Teachers have a detailed knowledge of students' needs and potential, which complements the effective methods used for targeting and tracking achievement. Rewards and sanctions are effectively introduced to maintain students' involvement. Students at risk of underachieving receive well tailored support and guidance, which keeps them engaged. The expertise of many external agencies is utilised to good effect. Staff identify the needs of vulnerable students well, giving strong support to them and their families. Thoughtful induction processes help new students to settle in and older students receive effective advice about the appropriate choice of future learning pathways.

Clear, detailed policies for health, safety and child protection are familiar to all staff. There are regular inspections of the school premises and risk assessments for all eventualities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The overall quality of leadership and management is good, with outstanding direction provided by the headteacher. Since his appointment in 2003, the headteacher has been the key driving force in moving the school forward from a position of declining standards. Five new assistant headteachers have been appointed who, together with the headteacher and deputies, form a strong senior leadership team. There is a commonly shared vision between the headteacher, governors, senior leadership team and staff. The school places a high priority on raising standards and on ensuring that there is a totally inclusive learning environment for all students. The strategic plans correctly identify the priorities and actions for improvement. These are produced as a result of very good team work and consultation between the senior leadership team, governors and staff. Each subject in turn has its own action plan, which is closely linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan.

The school has developed effective systems for monitoring and evaluating its own progress and standards across the school. As a result, the senior leadership team and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. One particularly good system is the use of curriculum review weeks to provide a detailed scrutiny of the work and standards in each subject area. This process culminates in the production of a detailed evaluation report. Governors receive termly updates on progress against the school improvement plan. An effective performance management system is in place for all teachers and staff. Heads of department are developing well as an important leadership group in the school and are responsible for monitoring and quality assuring the standards in their curriculum area, including undertaking lesson observations and appraising teachers.

The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively, with rigour and challenge. The school's finances are well managed by governors and are used efficiently to ensure that teaching and learning resources around the school are generally good.

Within the constraints of its budget the school endeavours to ensure that the accommodation adequately meets the needs of teachers and learners. The school has correctly prioritised areas for further improvement. The school has good links with its parents. The great majority of parents, through their questionnaire, agreed that the school is led and managed well. Inspectors agree with one parent who said, 'the school is striving to improve and has a clear idea of where it needs to be'.

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	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
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

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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?	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

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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you about your work and to listen to your views about the school. We have decided that Morley High School is a satisfactory and improving school. We also recognise that you, along with the teachers, parents and governors are all proud of the school and are working hard to see it become even better.

What we liked most about your school

- The good leadership provided by the headteacher and his team.
- Your good behaviour and polite manners around school.
- The good care, guidance and support available to you.
- The way you feel safe around school and know who to go to in times of trouble.
- The caring ethos which surrounds everything about the school.
- The good relationships between yourselves and with teachers.
- Most of the teaching, which is good and helps you to do your best.
- The outstanding curriculum and range of courses that you can study, particularly from ages 14 to 19.
- The wide range of activities at lunchtime and before and after school.
- The interest your parents show in the school and their view that the school is improving well.

What we have asked your school to do now

- To make sure that whatever your ability, you are all given enough challenge in order to raise the standards of work, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- To make sure that the elements of good and exciting teaching take place in all lessons across the school.

The inspection team hope you are pleased with the things we have said about your school and are proud of what you, your staff, governors and parents have achieved. We found our two days in the school to be an enjoyable experience.