



# The Cathedral CE High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108296  
**LEA** Wakefield  
**Inspection number** 277944  
**Inspection dates** 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr John Young HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Thornes Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Wakefield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		West Yorkshire WF2 8QF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 303740
<b>Number on roll</b>	1017	<b>Fax number</b>	01924 382674
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Sue Parton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 February 2003	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul West

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 November 2005 - 24 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277944
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and three additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The Cathedral High School is an average sized, voluntary controlled Church of England comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 16. It has 1,017 students. Some 90% of students are from white British backgrounds. A further 10% of students originate from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group coming from Pakistani heritage, and there are an increasing number of refugee and asylum seeker children. However, the number of students that speak English as an additional language is broadly in line with national averages. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of educational need are also similar to national averages. The school serves an area which contains significant pockets of deprivation, and students enter the school with below average attainment. The school is currently not full, and has in excess of 60 in-year admissions. The Cathedral High School is a specialist school in the Performing Arts, has Artsmark Silver and Sportsmark accreditation.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

Inspectors do not agree with the school's view that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this 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 in relation to the progress being made by large groups of students at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Overall standards and achievement are inadequate and substantial improvements are required at both Key Stages 3 and 4 for the majority of students. Although the attitudes and behaviour of students are variable in quality, personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Leadership and management, although in a state of transition, are satisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support are good. Child protection systems and procedures are in place and are understood by staff. Teachers, support staff and a range of external agencies provide significant pastoral and emotional support to a large number of students. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Students respond best to highly focused, interesting and supportive teaching, whilst weaker features include insufficiently challenging work and ineffective behaviour management. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and some creative solutions, aimed at ensuring more appropriate experiences for students, have been introduced. The school's specialist status is having an increasing impact on the breadth of provision.

Inspectors judge that the school has the capacity to improve, and this is reflected in some of the effective steps that have been taken since the last inspection. However, the school has not made sufficient progress since the last inspection overall, and does not currently provide satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress being made by significant groups of students in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Tackle inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and improve punctuality, attendance, and the monitoring and reinforcement of codes of conduct.
- Build a clear understanding so that both students and staff are fully aware of the importance of assessment. In particular, make greater efforts to ensure that all students have a better understanding of what working at a particular level means and what they need to do to improve further.
- Improve the curriculum, ensuring statutory requirements are met in relation to curriculum time and ensuring accreditation opportunities for all students.
- Ensure that there is a sufficiently robust strategic overview so that the many strategies, initiatives and policies being introduced are appropriately managed, co-ordinated and focused upon the key issues for development.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Inspectors do not agree with the school's view that standards and achievement are satisfactory. Achievement and standards are inadequate. Students' attainment on entry is below average. The students' progress at Key Stage 3 is significantly below average and below average for the majority of students at Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 3, although results in 2005 show an improvement from 2004 in English and science, they are still significantly below national averages. The school failed to meet most of its targets.

At general certificate of secondary education (GCSE), the proportion of students achieving five or more higher grades increased from 29% in 2004 to 40% in 2005. Similarly, groups of students from minority ethnic backgrounds improved on their past performance. However, the number of pupils gaining no passes has increased, and there was a dip in students' performance in English and mathematics. The school fell short of its targets for the number of students gaining five or more A\* to G grades, which continues to fall. Girls significantly outperform boys.

Students with learning difficulties make less progress than they should. Scrutiny of some students' work and the observation of lessons confirm the view that a majority of students are not progressing as well as they should.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The school judges this area of its work as satisfactory and inspectors agree. Students' attendance is slightly lower than the national average but is on a rapidly rising trend. This is largely due to the very effective monitoring and promotion of all attendance and punctuality issues by school staff and external agencies. In lessons where teaching is engaging with elements of challenge, students mostly exhibit positive attitudes to their work. However, in some lower quality lessons and a Year 9 assembly, the attitudes of some students were unsatisfactory.

Overall, students interviewed during the inspection said that they felt safe and that they can approach a wide range of adults for help and advice; however, some of the younger pupils did feel that bullying was an issue. There are year group councils and an overarching whole school council in place, which give students additional opportunities for personal development. The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Good use is made of the local community and wider environment to enhance students' personal development through regular educational and environmental visits. There is also a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are very well used by pupils and which lead to improved access to sport and a developing understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Good arrangements exist to prepare students for further study or work, and to provide them with the necessary skills to make sensible choices in connection with their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory and has some strengths. In the better lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and generally plan lessons well. A consistency in the structure of lessons helps students know what to expect and to settle quickly to work. In many cases teachers explain to students what they are expected to learn in the lesson and effective starter activities recall previous work and lead in to the new. Questioning is used well to challenge students' thinking. Good and supportive relationships in most lessons create a good learning atmosphere where discussions and group work are managed well. Lessons move with pace, and students are motivated by the work, enjoy their learning and make good progress.

Allowing time at the end of a lesson to review learning is inconsistent. Teaching is less effective when supervising staff cannot answer subject specific questions or when pace or challenge is lacking. The challenging behaviour of some students is often managed well but occasionally it reduces the effectiveness of the teaching. When the teacher is unable to manage this behaviour the quality of the teaching deteriorates. Teachers know their students and plan work to meet their particular needs well. Some additional staff are used effectively to support pupils. Work is regularly and accurately marked. Students' end of year targets are rarely described in sufficient detail for students to understand how they might improve their work and marking does not consistently give this guidance.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school has been innovative in its attempts to ensure that all students' needs are met; for example, through the introduction of the three different 'pathways' in Years 10 and 11. However, in doing so it has not ensured that all statutory requirements are met. Moreover, while this change has been judged to be at least partly responsible for the improved A\* to C GCSE grades in 2005, it has not yet demonstrated broader success and its impact is not yet comprehensively monitored. In future the school needs to make the necessary arrangements to ensure students can claim the appropriate accreditation.

There are some strengths to the curriculum. Popular performing arts courses feature strongly for students of all ages, reflecting the school's specialist status. Performing arts also form a major component of the extra-curricular programme, along with sporting activities; enrichment activities overall are good. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and improving. Some specific activities for gifted and talented students are provided but these are not extensive. The arrangements for mentoring small groups of students during tutorial time mean that the majority of students in the class are sent home early and do not receive the

recommended amount of curriculum time. Similarly, students in Year 9 are allowed to leave early on a carousel arrangement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school judges this area to be satisfactory but the inspection team feel that it is good. The quality of care provided by the school is therefore of a high standard and many aspects of its work embrace the key areas of Every Child Matters. Child protection systems and procedures are in place and are understood by staff. Teaching staff and a very wide range of internal and external personnel provide significant pastoral and emotional support to a large number of students, including those who are looked after or vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Additional learning and specialist behavioural support is also provided to a range of students who have an individual learning plan. Furthermore, two learning mentors support identified students in most year groups, although the support for Year 8 students is a current weakness. Students' academic monitoring and assessment systems are in place but are not consistently used to inform future progression. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and are regularly consulted on a wide range of school issues. Good arrangements exist to support students as they enter and move through the school, particularly in terms of the choices they have to make. Although the school accepts that the number of fixed term exclusions is still too high, the background monitoring, support and evaluation systems are good.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are in a state of transition, with a new headteacher and chair of governors taking up their roles in September 2005. The school has some understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher is determined to raise standards and has a clear vision of how to do this. He has identified realistic priorities and is putting in place appropriate strategic staffing structures, although interim arrangements are in place until all appointments can be made. Several middle managers are relatively new in post. Sound plans are in place to develop aspects of leadership and management, such as broadening quality assurance arrangements and developing the analysis and use of performance data, but these are yet to be fully implemented. Governors are supportive of the school but there is not a full complement and their monitoring procedures are not yet sharp enough. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall because improvements in provision have not yet had the required impact on increasing students' attainment. There is the capacity to improve further. Areas requiring development are well known and staff share a commitment to tackling these. The school values the views of parents and works in good partnership with the local authority and other agencies to help bring about improvement.

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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?	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	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	4	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	3	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	3	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>	2	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	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	4	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**

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We were able to visit lessons and to talk to a number of you. We also read the results of questionnaires completed by you and your parents; they were very helpful to us.

Here is a summary of our main findings which I hope will be of interest to you.

- We have decided that your school needs a notice to improve. This is because the results you get in tests and examinations are not good enough and need to be improved by a lot, because you are not doing as well as you could be.
- The teaching you receive is satisfactory, and because of your performing arts status there are now more opportunities for you to take part in a wide range of activities such as music, dance, performances and sport.
- The recent changes to how your classes are organised have benefited some of you, and you are able to work better and achieve more each lesson.
- The school cares about your personal safety, development and well-being. The majority of you enjoy coming to school, although some of you are concerned about bullying. Your behaviour is improving, as are your attitudes to learning and to your teachers. However, some of you are absent too often and regularly arrive late to lessons.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Provide you with the right help and support so that you reach your potential, and achieve what you are capable of, particularly in tests and examinations.
- Make sure that the existing, and the recently introduced, policies and systems are properly managed and clearly understood by everyone.
- We ask that teachers give you the right guidance so that you have a better understanding of how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve further.
- Make some changes to the curriculum to give you the chance to gain more accreditations and awards.
- Continue to encourage you to attend more regularly and get to lessons on time, and make sure the behaviour and attitudes of students in and outside of the classroom continue to get better.

Staff at the school know what needs to be done, and have introduced many changes, which they hope will provide you with a better quality of education. We ask that you and your parents/carers support them in their efforts to improve your school.