



Heysham High School Sports College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119711
LEA
Inspection number 280640
Inspection dates 5 December 2005 to 6 December 2005
Reporting inspector Joe Clark

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Limes Avenue
School category	Community		Morecambe
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Lancashire, LA3 1HS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01524 416830
Number on roll	1310	Fax number	01524 832622
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Bill Riddell
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	5 December 2005 - 6 December 2005	280640

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Heysham School Sports College is a larger than average mixed comprehensive school with approximately 1,300 pupils on roll including 160 in the sixth form. The school draws its pupils mainly from an area of high social and economic deprivation. The majority have below average attainment on entry to Year 7. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average as is the number identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those whose first language is not English is low.

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 this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing, or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Standards are below average on entry but the results of national tests at the end of Years 9 and 11 are consistently well below average. Whilst some teaching is good, too much is unsatisfactory and, consequently, too few pupils make enough progress over time. Parents are concerned at the high incidence of teacher absence and the disruption to pupils' learning caused by the large number of supply and temporary staff the school has had to employ.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. Specialist Sports College status is helping to promote a good understanding of the link between health, fitness and a sense of well-being. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are satisfactory. Community links are outstanding.

The leadership team has benefited from the guidance of the acting temporary headteacher. A number of changes have been made to the way the school is organised and a strategic approach to improving the quality of education is emerging. However, leadership and management, including school governance are unsatisfactory because they have not made sure that teaching and learning are adequate. Moreover, improvement since the previous inspection is inadequate; the low standards identified in the previous report have not been tackled successfully. Some better systems to do this have been put in place, but they are in the very early stages and have had little impact so far. Consequently, the school has not demonstrated that it has enough capacity to improve.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 4

The sixth form is ineffective because not enough students achieve high standards and too few make adequate progress. In 2005, a large number of Year 12 and 13 students either failed to achieve their expected grades, or failed to achieve a grade at all. Teaching in the sixth form has failed to raise standards, which are below average. The leadership and management of the sixth form are unsatisfactory because students do not achieve as well as they should and the systems for monitoring and reviewing their progress against challenging targets are not robust enough. The school does not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form. Requirements for entry lack clarity and in some instances this contributes to underachievement. The arrangements for monitoring attendance are weak.

Students get on well with one another and with their teachers. They have mature and responsible attitudes to their studies. They believe they are well cared for.

What the school should do to improve further

To raise standards and improve achievement the school should:

- improve teaching and learning by sharing good practice in order to eliminate unsatisfactory teaching and bring all lessons up to the quality of the best
- improve the sixth form's leadership and management, particularly in relation to tracking students' progress and attendance so that underachievement can be identified and tackled at an early stage
- establish more robust arrangements for setting pupils' challenging targets and for checking on their progress
- strengthen management and monitoring systems in order to identify both how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to bring about improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils enter the school with below average standards and by Year 9 standards have fallen to well below average and progress is unsatisfactory. Results in national tests taken by pupils in Year 9 in English, mathematics and science are consistently well below average and targets are rarely met. Pupils do particularly poorly in mathematics, partly as a result of staffing difficulties leading to inadequate teaching.

In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to make inadequate progress and by Year 11 standards remain well below average. Results in general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) in 2004 were the best for a number of years but were still well below average. In 2005, results fell back to their lowest level for five years. In some subjects, for example, physical education, pupils do consistently well, particularly girls.

Despite often receiving effective support from teaching assistants, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not make sufficient progress because the overall inadequacy of the teaching restricts their learning.

Achievement in the sixth form is inadequate. Too many students did not achieve their target grades in 2005. Results fluctuate from year to year but in 2004 results were below average. The vocational business course is a consistently high performer. Given that attainment on entry is broadly average and in some subjects above average; for example, in Year 12 history, progress is unsatisfactory. Subject performance varies from year to year. In 2003 and 2004, students' results in sports studies were significantly above average. Results in general studies were poor.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory. Many pupils enjoy coming to school and, although a significant minority of pupils do not attend school

or have poor attitudes, the attitudes and behaviour of the majority are satisfactory. The good use of the learning support centre has resulted in the need for fewer exclusions and more effective re-integration into the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Much has been done since the last inspection to improve their cultural development which is now satisfactory. In the sixth form, students' attitudes to learning are good and they get on well with each other and their teachers.

Attendance is unsatisfactory in the main school and remains stubbornly below the national average. Only Year 7 is currently attending at acceptable levels. Complete attendance figures for the sixth form were not made available.

The school works hard to promote healthy lifestyles, especially through its status as a sports college. Pupils are encouraged to work safely.

Through a variety of activities and events, particularly sporting and musical, but also business links, the school and pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the local community. There are good opportunities for pupils to enhance their economic awareness through work experience placements and enterprise activities. However, weak literacy and numeracy skills limit the extent to which some pupils can make an economic contribution when they leave school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and as a result pupils do not make enough progress. Some good teaching was seen. These lessons were characterised by good planning and an interesting range of activities. The work set was challenging, expectations were high and pupils understood what they needed to do in order to improve their work.

In the weakest lessons, the teachers' expectation of what pupils could achieve was too low and their skills in managing pupils' behaviour were weak. Basic routines for managing behaviour were not well established. Pupils sometimes complained that lessons were dull and the pace of learning slow; in these lessons they found it difficult to settle. Planning was often unsatisfactory and took little account of what the pupils already knew. It made little use of assessment information to set challenging work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, despite getting partially effective support from some teaching assistants, do not make enough progress because teachers are not skilful enough in setting work suitable for their needs. Little account is taken of any individual education plans when devising lessons.

The quality of marking and use of assessment are too variable but have improved for younger pupils recently as a result of a new approach to assessment. Not enough has been done to ensure pupils are set targets based on their prior attainment and checks to see how well they are doing are not frequent enough. Some useful work is being introduced in some subjects, for example, in design and technology, but practice is

inconsistent across the school. The lack of effective assessment and its use to guide planning is limiting the school's capacity to tackle the pupils' underachievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory because the range of subjects meets the needs of most pupils. Older pupils have a good range of options and many opportunities for them to develop enterprise and financial skills. All pupils are well prepared for work through effective careers guidance.

A good range of vocational courses exists in partnership with local colleges. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are well attended.

However, personal, social and health education provision is inadequate because it does not adequately cover all aspects of citizenship. Opportunities to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills are unsatisfactory for a significant minority of pupils in Years 10 and 11.

The curriculum is further enriched by the outstanding links with the community that have been developed as a result of Specialist Sports College status. Particularly effective links have been forged with local primary schools and colleges. Specialist Sports College status is making a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and to improving standards in physical education but has not had discernable impact on achievement overall.

In the sixth form, students are offered a reasonable range of academic and vocational subjects. However, there are insufficient vocational courses at Level 2 to match the needs of many students, though the school is planning to introduce more in 2006. As at the time of the previous inspection, religious education is still not offered to all students.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Some aspects of the care provided for the pupils are good. Child protection procedures are understood by all staff and proper attention is paid to health and safety procedures and risk assessments. Pupils say that they feel safe.

Personal support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good but the recently arrived pupils who speak little English lack the specialist support to help them learn English more quickly. Parents are kept well informed about the progress and behaviour of their children. The pastoral system is increasingly more effective in monitoring pupils' personal development. There is insufficient guidance to pupils and students on how well they are doing through checking academic progress against previously set targets.

Sixth form students receive good personal guidance when making applications for higher education. However, guidance on the most appropriate sixth form courses to take is not as helpful as it could be because of the lack of clear criteria for entry into

the sixth form. Students say they are well supported and cared for. Nevertheless, their progress and attendance are not monitored sufficiently.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership of the temporary acting headteacher is bringing about some change but he has not been in place long enough for this to demonstrate clear and sustained improvement. More teamwork by senior and middle managers is creating more energy and a more positive approach to tackling long-standing weaknesses. There are early indications of improvement, for example, in the behaviour of pupils. However, much of this is in the very early stages and where new systems have been introduced they have not had sufficient time to show any effect.

The school is benefiting from strong support from the local authority and this is necessary as many senior and middle managers lack basic skills, for example, in observing lessons, and making judgements about teaching. Whilst this is recognised by the school, the training programme has begun only very recently. The temporary acting headteacher spends three days a week in school and uncertainties remain about how long this arrangement will last.

Resources, and particularly ICT resources, are inadequate. Many parents expressed concern at the disruption to their children's education caused by temporary or supply teaching, particularly in mathematics. Inspectors agree that this has been a problem.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are inadequate because students do not achieve as well as they should. Basic procedures for checking their progress are either lacking or ineffective. The school was unable to provide basic details about the students' attendance.

Governance is unsatisfactory because it has failed to hold the school to account for its weak performance and it has not been successful in securing improvement. Moreover, the school does not meet statutory requirements to provide pupils with the required amount of teaching in ICT. There is no religious education in the sixth form and a daily act of collective worship is not held. The school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

The school has not demonstrated that it has the capacity to bring about the required improvement.

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?	4	4
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	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	No
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	No

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	4	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	3

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?	4	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	
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

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Heysham High School Sports College

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7 December 2005

Dear Students,

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to carry out the inspection of your school.

Below is a summary of what we found.

Based on how well you were doing when you left primary school, you should be doing much better in your national tests at the end of Years 9 and 11. We don't think the school is doing enough to ensure you achieve well in these tests.

Sixth form students should be achieving better results in AS and A2 level courses. They have a mature and sensible attitude to their work and get on well together.

In many lessons you learn a lot but in others you learn very little. Sometimes this is because you don't try hard enough. Occasionally, you misbehave and don't let the teacher get on with the lesson. If you are one of the large number of pupils in Years 8 to 11 who do not attend regularly enough, your learning is bound to suffer.

For the majority of pupils, your behaviour and attitudes to school are satisfactory.

Your teachers give you satisfactory guidance and support.

The way the school works with the local community is outstanding.

Your acting headteacher has already made improvements, particularly in the way you behave. The priority now is to improve the quality of the lessons you receive so that from now on you achieve higher standards and better results.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Clark

Lead Inspector