



# Selby High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 121702  
**LEA** North Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 281084  
**Inspection dates** 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Honoree Gordon HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Leeds Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Selby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		North Yorkshire YO8 4HT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01757 703327
<b>Number on roll</b>	919	<b>Fax number</b>	01757 708212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr G Gibson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr P Eckersley

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 March 2006 - 24 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281084
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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

Selby High is an average-sized specialist arts school enrolling students from the town of Selby and some outlying villages. Over one third of the students come from relatively deprived backgrounds and the area has recently experienced high levels of unemployment. Students' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. There are fewer students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is usually found, though the proportion with a statement for their educational needs is average. There are very few ethnic minority students or students for whom English is not first their language. The school has several awards recognising the quality of its provision, including The National Healthy Schools standard, The Youth Chartermark and Artsmark Silver.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that it provides a satisfactory education for its students. There are many good features, including, the broad and balanced curriculum, which is encouraging good attitudes to learning, and the provision for students' personal development and well-being. Care, guidance and support for students are outstanding. Students enjoy school and see it as recently much improved; their behaviour is good. The school is well led and managed, though the quality of middle management is still variable. The headteacher is outstanding; he has a clear vision and the drive and determination to see this come to fruition. Initiatives are beginning to demonstrate impact, resulting in much improved general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) results in 2005. These show the school in a very favourable light compared to schools in similar circumstances. Lessons are satisfactory, but often lack variety in the activities undertaken. Students reach the standards expected of them nationally and, overall, their progress is satisfactory. They leave school equipped with the necessary key skills in literacy and numeracy and the vast majority progress to further education or training. Specialist Arts status is providing opportunities which enhance students' enjoyment and success in learning. New building is extending resources still further. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity for further improvement. The headteacher enjoys the confidence of parents/carers and the school works effectively with other agencies and partners. There has been satisfactory progress towards meeting the recommendations of the last inspection, especially in provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and the school has correctly identified its future priorities.

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

- Ensure that middle managers consistently and effectively focus on raising achievement.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all groups of students, particularly the more able.
- Fulfil the requirements for citizenship education.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Students join the school in Year 7 with average standards. All, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress reaching national average standards in the end of Year 9 tests and in GCSE examinations. Students reach the required levels of competence in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Inspectors agree with the school that achievement is satisfactory.

Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 declined in 2005, but remained at the national average. Students did notably better in science but significantly less well in English, confirming a trend in recent years. All groups of students made satisfactory progress, apart from some lower attaining girls.

Progress is better in Years 10 and 11 and in these years students tend to perform better in science and English than in mathematics. Overall GCSE results in 2005 show marked improvement, a significant reversal of a trend of decline. Though the school did not meet its demanding targets for the overall pass rate, the grades achieved by individual students in 2005 were better than the national average. In many subjects, achievements were better than expected and significantly better than students in schools in similar circumstances. Students of average ability made particularly good progress, boys narrowing the gap with girls. However, in several subjects there were surprisingly few top grades.

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

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect is good and is seen as a key priority. The school tracks carefully what is provided and the impact it is having. Students say they enjoy school and older students say that the atmosphere is now much better: the school feels much safer and any incidents of bullying are dealt with firmly. The provision for social, moral and cultural education is good, although there are too few opportunities for spiritual development. The school has considerable strengths in providing for students' social and moral development. Inspectors found the students to be decent young people, with a moral conscience that extends to helping others, for example in voluntary work or in fundraising. Attendance is satisfactory, because school life is far more enjoyable for many now.

Students are cheerful, confident and keen to do well. The house system provides good opportunities for students of all ages to work together and is encouraging a healthy, competitive spirit. There is a broad range of activities in music and sport which are well supported and several ways to contribute to school life, such as the school council and interviews with the headteacher. Students guide each other through the mentoring programme. The personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) programme includes discussion about drug education, sex and relationships. This helps students prepare for their future beyond school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and inspectors saw some good teaching. Relationships are good and teachers work hard to build students' confidence. As a result, students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are usually good. Teachers use assessment well and most use ICT effectively in lessons to enhance learning. Many lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. However, some teachers do not meet the needs of all students in their classes. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to ensure students use appropriate subject language and explain themselves clearly and audibly. Good lessons have a brisk, lively

pace and teachers have high expectations; students learn well and enjoy their work. Learning is less effective when students do not fully understand the task or where there is a narrow range of activities. In these lessons, there is a lack of challenge, sometimes leading to students becoming inattentive. Students understand their targets, know how well they are doing in each subject, and what they need to do to improve. However, the marking of work is inconsistent and does not consistently provide pointers for improvement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It meets students' needs well, by providing a wide and well balanced programme, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Students choose from a broad range of programmes, including vocational courses. Work-related learning provision is good. The Prince's Trust initiative successfully engages potentially disaffected students and others who benefit from its more practical programme. There is good curricular provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. PSHCE and careers education are good, but the citizenship element is not distinct enough to meet statutory requirements. The school ensures that students are taught how to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle. Specialist Arts status is helping to strengthen opportunities in the performing arts: some subjects, such as art and design and dance are particularly popular, with new subjects also planned for 2006-7. The range of extra clubs and activities is good; students enjoy them, and their achievement and personal development is boosted by their participation.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school is modest about the quality of care, guidance and support it provides for students: provision is outstanding. The school provides a secure, positive and happy place for students to learn. Students say they feel valued, listened to, and looked after. As a result, they are confident and positive both in and out of lessons. Risk assessments and systems are thorough and arrangements to support vulnerable students and to ensure child protection are exemplary. Communication between teachers and with outside agencies is effective in raising awareness about sensitive issues. The new house system, the mentors, and the school nurse are all ways in which the school ensures there is always someone for students to turn to. As one pupil put it, 'The school is brilliant at helping us with any problems.' Parents/carers are happy with the education that the school provides.

Students appreciate the detailed guidance on options and careers. The school actively seeks ways to engage students, especially when work seems difficult. Alternative approaches in subjects such as physical education and the arts, extra study sessions and access to computers for independent learning show the school's imaginative attempts to support them. Pupil planners aid motivation, because students and parents/carers have had a full say in their design and use. They include the tracking and grading system, a major feature in helping students realise their own standard

and potential. The new rewards system is superb in giving genuine praise to those who have achieved. It includes sending home 'cool' postcards, designed in school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Staff, parents/carers and students remark on the improved atmosphere and resources in recent years. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. He has a very clear strategic vision for the school, shared by his staff and he has created an influential and cohesive leadership team. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging every pupil to be successful. Specialist Arts college status has been achieved and students' progress improved in 2005.

Performance management is well established and has enabled the staff to contribute to wider school improvement. Middle managers rightly talk of being encouraged and challenged by senior leaders, though some middle managers are more effective than others. The school is aware of this and is intervening to effect improvement. Senior leaders have good skills in self-review and the use of data, but at departmental level these skills are inconsistent. Lessons are regularly monitored, however the school realises that the system does not yet emphasise sufficiently the outcomes of lessons in terms of the progress students make, or always identify key areas for improvement.

The contribution of the governing body is satisfactory, with some good aspects. The governors' varied experience and knowledge of their community provide important insight and support; for example, their work to prevent permanent exclusions and the annual awards to staff and students are innovative features. Governors' work on finance is strategic and effective, but their contribution to longer-term change is underdeveloped.

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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>	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	2	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>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	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

<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>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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 enjoyed our visit and your views were very helpful to us. We were also able to read your parents'/carers' opinions; these showed that they are happy with the education you receive. You and your parents/carers told us you felt the atmosphere and the resources in school had really improved in recent years. We were able to visit some of your lessons. We agree with your headteacher that the education at Selby High is satisfactory and we found many good features.

Here is a summary of our findings:

- you receive excellent care, guidance and support from the school staff and others who work with the school
- your school is well led; we think your headteacher is outstanding - he is very clear about how to move the school forward so that it keeps getting better
- your personal development and your behaviour are good; we think the school really tries to give you a say in what happens and that makes a difference to how you feel about learning
- we were impressed by the new rewards system and the house system
- GCSE results in 2005 were much improved and your school did much better than other schools in similar circumstances
- your results in tests and examinations are satisfactory
- your rate of progress is in line with other, similar schools, but it is generally better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9
- you do well in some subjects, especially science
- in ICT you make good progress in the first three years
- the range and choice of subjects is good; you told us you especially like the performing arts subjects and the plans for developing these further
- teaching and learning are fine, but some lessons are more interesting than others.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to work on the following points:

- to help you make faster progress in some subjects: we think this is possible if lesson plans look more at how to meet the needs of the different groups in the class, especially the most able students
- to think about what makes lessons really interesting and enjoyable for you
- to make sure lessons on citizenship can be clearly identified.

We feel confident the school can do this. Your teachers work hard and give up a lot of time to help you. We were pleased to see your positive attitudes to school. We found you confident and cheerful and we ask you to play your part by continuing in this way. Your school is on the right track and your recent examination results are proof of this. Keep it up and your school will continue to improve.