



# New Park High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106011  
**LEA** Salford  
**Inspection number** 283002  
**Inspection dates** 21 November 2005 to 22 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Michael Cladingbowl HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Off Green Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community special		Patricroft
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Eccles, Manchester M30 0RW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 921 2000
<b>Number on roll</b>	57	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 921 2030
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr Neil Barrett
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 March 2002	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Almut Bever-Warren

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 November 2005 - 22 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 283002
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an additional inspector. An inspection over two years ago made the school subject to special measures and the school's progress was monitored by HMI.

## Description of the school

New Park High School is for boys and girls aged 11 to 16 who have a statement of special educational need because of social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. There are 49 pupils on roll and all of them are boys. They are drawn from some of the most disadvantaged areas in Salford and nearly all are eligible for free school meals. Most had a history of very poor attendance before being admitted to the school. A large proportion is involved with external agencies and a fifth are looked after either by the local authority or other carers. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is very low and many have learning difficulties that are linked to their social, behavioural or emotional difficulties.

The school moved to attractive new buildings in 2004. Following a period of staffing difficulties and shortages, a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were appointed in 2005. The school now has a full complement of teaching and other support staff.

## 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 this is an improving school. It provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and no longer requires special measures.

Since the last inspection, marked improvements to teaching, the pupils' behaviour, and care, guidance and support mean that a greater number are enjoying school and achieving more. The strong leadership of the headteacher, and the hard work of staff, have created a positive climate for learning. Governors and senior leaders know their school well and have a detailed grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. The school is well on its way to becoming an inclusive community where every child matters, although poor attendance and weak basic skills slow the rate of progress for some pupils. Some subject leaders need more support in planning for improvement.

The school has demonstrated good capacity to improve. The local authority has provided very good support. Value for money is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the pupils' attendance.
- Develop the role of subject leaders in planning for improvement.
- Strengthen the arrangements for teaching basic skills, including literacy, numeracy and communication, across the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that standards are very low but that the pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Moreover, standards are rising and achievement is improving.

In 2005, 15 of the 17 Year 11 pupils who attended the school, either full time or part time, sat general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) examinations in English, science, mathematics and art. This was a much higher proportion than in previous years. Most of these pupils achieved well, particularly in art and science, exceeding the realistic but challenging targets set for them. Five also achieved entry-level qualifications in food technology. The remaining Year 11 pupils who did not achieve any GCSE passes were educated either in a secure unit, a psychiatric hospital or at home.

Five of the eight Year 9 pupils sat the 2005 National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. These pupils achieved satisfactorily in science, but did less well in mathematics and English. Teacher assessments for the other pupils show that they made satisfactory progress in all subjects. These results were broadly similar to those in 2004.

During the inspection, the pupils usually made good progress in lessons and this confirms the school's view that most pupils are now making satisfactory or better

progress overall. A good system for setting the pupils' targets, and for checking on their progress, has helped to sharpen the way teachers use assessment to improve achievement and raise standards.

Although poor attendance and gaps in the pupils' learning still result in some underachievement, most pupils are doing considerably better than before. Many have also made significant progress in dealing with their social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. A few have made exceptional progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school's view that the personal development and well-being of the pupils are satisfactory. This is a considerable achievement since many pupils have a number of difficulties that adversely influence their personal development.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved markedly, both overall and for many individual pupils, although it remains below the average for similar schools. Nearly all of the pupils join the school with a history of very poor attendance and many are now attending school regularly for the first time. About a third of the pupils have good or better attendance and the very small number of the pupils who never attend has a big impact on the school's overall attendance figures. Nevertheless, further improvement in this area is possible as some systems lack refinement: for example, telephone calls to the homes of absent pupils could happen much earlier in the day.

Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong although at times some struggle to put this into practice in their day-to-day lives. Nevertheless, their behaviour was generally orderly during the inspection and they were polite, friendly and welcoming. The number of fixed-term exclusions from school is high, but they only occur after a serious or repeated breach of discipline and procedures for excluding pupils are followed scrupulously. The number of serious incidents of misbehaviour, including violent behaviour, has fallen sharply this term continuing a downward trend. The pupils work safely and sensibly in practical subjects because of good and close supervision. They adopt healthy life styles in school, but this is often in stark contrast to how they behave out of school. For example, many of the pupils smoke but smoking on the premises is rare. Overall, the school is a much safer and happier place than it was at the time of the last inspection.

Parents speak very highly of the school. They describe it as a 'caring place for the pupils', and many believe that it has made a considerable difference to the pupils' lives. One parent stated that 'my son started part time, but now he comes to school all the time. His reading age has risen from 12 years to 15 years in three months'. Another told inspectors that her son had never wanted to go to school before but he now looked forward to it. 'He has got his self-esteem back', she commented, 'and he feels valued by the school. He came home from school not long ago and told me that they actually like me'. Parents believe they are listened to and a new school council lets the pupils meet and talk about their views.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community, for example by tidying the garden of a local primary school, baking cakes for the elderly, collecting money for a children's home in Africa, and by helping with sports coaching for younger pupils. The school has established a positive link with a nearby housing estate, inviting neighbours into school to see the work achieved by the pupils. Vibrant and attractive displays of art abound in corridors and in some rooms and reflect the increased importance attached to developing spiritual and cultural development. They are appreciated by the pupils who look after them well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

The number of pupils on work experience placements has increased and includes all pupils in Year 10 and Year 11. Opportunities to develop the basic skills that will help the pupils in the workplace are less frequent as many still struggle with basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, as well as with the communication skills needed to work successfully as part of a team.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school that teaching is usually satisfactory and often good. It is rarely unsatisfactory. Considerable effort has gone into planning lessons so that they capture and keep the attention of the pupils. Teachers have a growing knowledge of what each pupil already knows and use this to set suitably challenging learning and behavioural targets. Teachers and other staff have worked hard to develop their skills in managing the pupils' behaviour. As a consequence, pupils usually learn what is expected of them in lessons, although there are few opportunities for the pupils to learn independently.

Improvements to teaching have helped to establish a better ethos for learning. In one of the best lessons, a pupil enjoyed his work so much that he continued it into break time. When disruption does occur, it is usually managed well: in a Year 10 art lesson, the teacher insisted calmly that the pupils adhere to high standards of behaviour even when challenged by an upset pupil. In a Year 7 music lesson, the pupils ignored attempts by a pupil from another class to distract them and continued to concentrate on their work. Teaching was notably weaker in one mathematics lesson because little attempt had been made to set work that challenged or engaged the pupils.

Some pupils have large gaps in their previous learning, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and these gaps are being identified and acted upon. However, the support given to pupils is not always organised systematically or regularly enough across all subjects, and the lack of a personalised learning plan for basic skills means that pupils with uneven attendance do not routinely receive the support they need when they are in school.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met, although the national initiatives for improving literacy and numeracy are in the early stages. Classes are thoughtfully timetabled to reduce unnecessary movement and so help improve behaviour around school. Schemes of work are generally sound and are based securely on the National Curriculum. There are some opportunities to follow work-related courses and the school has identified that more needs to be done to meet the full range of the older pupils' interest in vocational education.

There is a sound system for setting curriculum targets and for assessing the pupils' progress towards them. Teachers use the pupils' individual behaviour plans and individual education plans to guide lesson planning, but few of these pay enough attention to developing the pupils' basic skills in a systematic way across all subjects.

Extra-curricular activities are adequate. Pupils can represent the school in a regional football league and many take part in visits to museums, libraries and leisure facilities, as well as doing activities such as horse riding and cycling. Lunchtime activities such as football, table tennis and playing computer games

are all available for the pupils. This helps to develop self-confidence in the pupils and widens their horizons.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's view that care, guidance and support are good. Pupils know who to turn to if they are in trouble and staff understand and know their pupils well. Parents and carers are routinely involved in making decisions about pupils, including in relation to attendance and behaviour.

There are good arrangements for ensuring that the pupils' health and safety are attended to. Child protection procedures are in place. A policy on the use of physical restraint is well established and guidelines and procedures are known and understood by all staff, parents and external agencies. Risk assessment and site management is secure.

The school has established a good system for checking on the pupils' behaviour and for rewarding success. All staff implement this system consistently. Rightly, the school has extended this recently to include detailed checks on the pupils' academic progress and this is resulting in better lesson planning. Annual review and interim review meetings are held as required. The progress of looked-after pupils is monitored carefully and they are progressing as well as their peers.

Frequent and close liaison with external agencies and other partners helps to broker early and specific support for individual pupils, and this work is coordinated well by the school. Recently, two pupils have been offered part-time placements in a local high school. Visiting speakers and volunteer mentors add to the work done by form tutors to give the pupils sensible advice about careers, sex and health related matters.

The local authority has provided very good support overall, including by funding an additional management post. In particular, the educational psychology service has worked successfully with many of the pupils to help them understand and manage their emotions. The work of the school improvement officer has been instrumental in supporting improvement to the quality of teaching and learning.

The high level of care, guidance and support provided to the pupils has helped many to overcome some of their considerable personal and other difficulties.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The strong leadership of the headteacher, and the support, hard work and enthusiasm of the teachers and other staff, have helped to transform this school. A clear educational direction and the unwavering commitment to making sure that each pupil experiences success has created an ethos in which vulnerable pupils can flourish and feel safe. Staff work very hard for the pupils and have responded well to the leadership and high expectations of the headteacher. Morale is high.

The advanced skills teacher has led the improvement in teaching and has been supported very well by the local authority. Lessons are observed frequently and training is provided for teachers each week after-school. The newly appointed deputy and assistant headteachers have made a positive contribution in the short time they have been in post. They bring valuable experience and expertise to the school, particularly in relation to the curriculum and to managing the pupils' behaviour.

Most subject leaders and other coordinators are enthusiastic, but some are new in post and not all have received enough guidance on how to plan for improvement, particularly in relation to improving the pupils' basic skills. The day-to-day running of the school is good, including administrative and financial procedures.

Governance is good. The governors are committed to the success of the school and they have very good insight into its strengths and weaknesses. Key governors have responsibility for aspects of the school improvement plan and they monitor the school's progress formally by visiting the school, by interviewing managers, and by scrutinising reports submitted to their meetings. There are no vacancies on the governing body. The school has a small and reducing budget deficit, but a repayment plan has been agreed with the local authority and the school is now on a sound financial footing. Pupils benefit from small class sizes and plentiful resources and this is helping them to make satisfactory or better progress. Consequently, value for money is satisfactory.

The school has improved markedly since its last inspection and since the arrival of the headteacher in early 2005. Good progress has been made in addressing nearly all of the weaknesses identified in March 2003 and there is good capacity to improve further.



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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	4	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>	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	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	4	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>	2	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	2	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	No
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	No

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so polite and helpful to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and are particularly grateful to those of you who spent lunchtime talking to us.

So what did we think?

- We agree with you that this is a better school than it was and have decided that it does not need me to visit it any more to check how well it is doing.
- We think that teaching is often good and that many of you are learning much more than you did in your previous schools.
- Most of you attend more than you did before, but because some of you have missed out on school so much in the past we have asked your teachers to make sure that you learn basic skills in all of your subjects.
- Obviously, we think that if you all came to school more, then you would make even faster progress.
- You should be proud of the way that most of you behaved. If you continue to do this then you will continue to do well at school.