



Moorside High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105977
LEA Salford
Inspection number 285462
Inspection dates 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006
Reporting inspector Ms Cathryn Kirby HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	East Lancashire Road
School category	Community		Swinton
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Manchester, Lancashire M27 0BH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7941045
Number on roll	1146	Fax number	0161 7941296
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Shaw
Date of previous inspection	15 September 2003	Headteacher	Mr Mills

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Introduction

When Moorside High School was inspected in March 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its students an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on five occasions to monitor its progress. The school was inspected in June 2006 by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Moorside High School is a mixed, 11 to 16 comprehensive located in a moderately affluent area of Greater Manchester, although over half of its students are from adjacent areas with broadly average socio-economic profiles. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The school is larger than average with 1,146 students on roll. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is average. However, a higher than average proportion of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The numbers of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those speaking English as an additional language are low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Moorside High School has improved considerably since March 2004. It is now providing a satisfactory education and satisfactory value for money. The leadership of the headteacher has united staff and students in a common purpose to make Moorside a school where young people can achieve their potential and develop into responsible citizens. Senior and middle leaders have a strong commitment to continue the drive to further raise standards and have recently improved the rigour of their quality assurance systems. The school is a calmer and more welcoming place than was the case at the last inspection. The culture shift has driven improvements in the students' attitudes to learning as a result of better lessons, an increasing number of which engage their interest and inspire them to learn. The students themselves report that lessons are better than they used to be and that they learn more. Parents are generally satisfied with the quality of education their children receive, although a small minority feel they could be better informed about their children's progress. Although standards remain below average, achievement has improved and is now satisfactory due to better teaching and more effective monitoring of students' progress to identify underachievement and target appropriate academic support. However, the more able students are not always challenged as well as they could be and the approach to developing the students' literacy and numeracy skills is inconsistent. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has suitable plans to address them.

Provision for the students' personal development is satisfactory, although despite considerable effort, attendance remains stubbornly below average. The school knows its students well. All students, from the most vulnerable to the most able, receive a good standard of care, guidance and support. A wide range of options at Key Stage 4 is well matched to the needs of all learners and links with local colleges provide work-related courses. The school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue the work to raise standards by further improving the proportion of lessons in which students make good or better progress.
- Maintain the rigour with which key areas of the school's work are monitored.
- Ensure consistency in the use of assessment information, so that all teachers plan challenging lessons.
- Develop the students' basic skills to better prepare them for further and higher education and work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in 2005 were below average overall. At Key Stage 3 standards fell slightly, reversing the trend of the previous two years. At Key Stage 4 the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE improved faster than the national trend to 46%. However, many students did not make the progress that they should between the ages of 11 and 16. Since September, a progressive improvement in the quality of teaching has resulted in students making at least satisfactory progress in lessons. A range of strategies to support academic progress has been effective in enabling a larger proportion of students to achieve their target grades in coursework, regular tests and mock examinations. This has had the effect of raising standards. Some of the students spoke very positively about the effect that this support has had on their progress. The school has made significant improvements to how it uses assessment information to track students' progress and to identify those students who are underachieving. The school's records of students' progress and early indications from the 2006 national curriculum tests suggest more students than ever will meet their challenging targets this summer.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Provision for the students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a number of opportunities to take on responsibility, for example, as prefects or mentors to younger students. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. Many display a mature attitude and behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students are generally polite and courteous to teachers, visitors and other adults. Attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall, and where activities are imaginative and capture their interest, students are keen and want to learn. Punctuality has vastly improved; students expect to be challenged if they are late to school or lessons. Attendance remains below average at 90.8%, although the school has done well to improve and sustain overall attendance by three percentage points since September. Students are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle through participation in physical education lessons, after-school sport and more recent initiatives such as the healthy food options at lunchtime. Bullying is not a concern. Students report this is infrequent and quickly and effectively dealt with. They feel involved in the life of the school and reasonably consulted. They feel confident to be themselves and express themselves in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect. Students would benefit from opportunities to participate constructively in lunchtime activities. The amount of litter they leave around after breaks and lunchtime is disappointing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and improving. There is an increasing amount of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. An effective programme of lesson observation monitors the quality of teaching and provides developmental feedback, support and training for teachers. Teachers are becoming more adventurous in their teaching, and a momentum for improvement has been established. In the good or better lessons, students respond with enthusiasm and interest. They make good progress and achieve well. Teachers' expectations are high in terms of both the level and pace of work. There is good emphasis upon developing students' ability to think for themselves and explain their reasoning. In the satisfactory lessons there is scope for more challenge and opportunities are not taken to promote basic skills. There is sometimes a loss of pace when students spend too long listening to their teacher talking. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching remains.

Very good progress has recently been made in the use of assessment techniques to assist learning, although practice is not yet consistent. Student tracking procedures are now more rigorous and some teachers are using this information to plan more challenging lessons. There are examples of good practice in peer and self-assessment and providing students with specific feedback on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's assessment that its curriculum is good. In Years 7 to 9 the curriculum is broad and balanced, with good opportunities for students to study modern foreign languages. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum has been substantially revised and reviewed, an important part of the process has been the involvement of students and their parents to ensure what is provided is appropriate for all learners. Students are able to choose from traditional GCSE courses, a wide range of vocational subjects or other practical or skill based courses. All courses lead to accreditation. The school uses its links with local colleges well to meet the needs and interests of individual students. Careful consideration is given to how students will be able to progress in the future using the qualifications they gain at school. Outside the formal curriculum, the school offers students a wide range of opportunities to explore and develop their interest in activities such as sport and drama. All students are taught citizenship, but the school has yet to undertake an audit of the subject to ensure that all students receive their full entitlement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for students. All statutory procedures, including those for child protection, are established and arrangements to

ensure health and safety are secure and regularly reviewed. The revision of responsibilities for heads of year and special needs staff has helped to ensure that all students, including the most vulnerable, are well supported to reach their personal and academic targets. This is ensured through helpful guidance based on the use of student performance information to identify those at risk of underachieving and to target appropriate intervention. Effective systems to support all students on entry to the school are enhanced through the involvement of older students as learning mentors to new learners entering Year 7. There is good guidance and support when students choose options at age 14. Students are also well prepared to make choices affecting their future at age 16 through taster days at local colleges, careers counselling and work experience.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges leadership and management to be good. Inspectors judge it to be satisfactory. The headteacher has set a clear direction in driving improvements to address the causes of underachievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning. He has worked hard to raise the profile of the school in the local community and to seek out opportunities to establish community links. He has challenged unsatisfactory performance and since his arrival, a number of staff have left the school. The school is aware of the need to ensure greater consistency in the implementation of school policies to raise standards further. New appointments have brought greater stability to staffing and strengthened the school's capacity to improve further. Newly qualified teachers are well supported through a sound induction programme. The roles and responsibilities of senior managers have been realigned and clarified. Leadership at the middle manager level has been strengthened by new appointments. A culture of increased accountability and high expectations tempered by appropriate support is emerging. Although the school has made a substantial improvement from a low starting point in March 2004, the rate of progress has been uneven. The school acknowledges that there is still some way to go to improve outcomes for students beyond those deemed satisfactory.

The school has recently sharpened its systems for checking the progress of work to improve outcomes for students. Consequently, they are clear about the further actions necessary to sustain the upward trend. They are aware of the need to consider a more rigorous approach to the development of the students'

basic skills. Governors are committed to the school and provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support. Through strong links with faculties the governing body ensures close involvement with staff and students. The school has been well supported to strengthen management and develop expertise through the work of specialist consultants and advisors provided by the local authority. A programme of refurbishment has improved the standard of accommodation and created a more pleasant environment for students and staff. Resources have been improved through the introduction of interactive whiteboard technology, upgrading of computer suites and additional books for the learning centre.

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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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?	3	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	3	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

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

Congratulations!

Your school has improved so much that we no longer need to keep coming back every term to check on progress.

The quality of the teaching you receive is much better than it used to be, which means you learn more and a greater number of you will achieve the test and examination results of which you are capable. Mr Mills, other senior staff, teachers and all the adults at Moorside have worked really hard to make your school a better place to be. You have played an important part too. You behave well in lessons and around school. You are polite and courteous to your teachers and visitors and have respect for one another. All of this makes your school a friendly and welcoming place to be. Many of you try hard to do your best in lessons, which together with the better teaching, means you learn more.

Well done! You can be proud of your efforts and of your school. We have asked Mr Mills and your teachers to make Moorside even better by:

- making sure the good and outstanding teaching and interesting lessons that we saw increase in frequency
- making sure all of you do as well as possible
- giving you more opportunity to develop skills that are so important to success in working life
- being able to express yourself clearly, think logically, listen to others' points of view, be numerate, write well and work well as a member of a team
- making sure that the actions they take to help you learn are actually working.

You can contribute to further improvement by always trying your best in lessons and attending regularly so that your learning isn't disrupted.