



# Worden Sports College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119741  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291528  
**Inspection dates** 16–17 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Jim Bennetts HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Westfield Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Leyland, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		PR25 1QX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 421021
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	520	<b>Fax number</b>	01772 456757
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms Christine Harrison
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Rignall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 11–16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 16–17 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291528
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Worden Sports College is a smaller than average secondary school for boys and girls aged 11–16. Most pupils live nearby. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free meals is similar to the national average, but few pupils are from affluent backgrounds and many live in circumstances of some disadvantage. About a quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and about 20 have statements of special educational needs. When pupils enter the school at age 11, there are fewer with high standards in national tests than are found nationally. Virtually all pupils are White British and none are learning English as an additional language. The school became a specialist Sports College in 2003.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Though pupils joining the school have standards that are generally lower than average, their progress throughout the school is satisfactory in most subjects. They develop particularly well in physical education (PE) and sport. GCSE results in 2005 were good, but the school has been unable to sustain that level of achievement due to staffing problems. Weak attendance, especially in Year 11, restricts achievement. A new headteacher was appointed from September 2005 and leadership at senior level is strong. The school has good capacity to promote improvement in the future.

Standards in national tests at age 14 and in GCSE are lower than those nationally, but comparable to those normally reached by pupils in similar schools. In many subjects, GCSE results are quite strong. However, in a few subjects results have been stubbornly weak. Some limitation of standards is due to staff changes or illness. Occasionally, teaching is not effective. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, with many instances of good teaching that draws out pupils' eagerness to learn. Some marking is painstaking and helpful; some books show very little marking. Senior staff are seeking to strengthen middle management, and monitoring procedures, in order to make quality assurance more effective.

Behaviour is generally satisfactory; it is usually good, but there are instances of unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils are generally happy at school and get on well with their teachers and one another. The school does well in ensuring a safe environment and encouraging pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils are given some chances to have a say in things at school and they contribute well to the life of the wider community. Through an effective curriculum, they develop the skills for a successful future. Pupils are well looked after. Arrangements for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have recently been strengthened. The system for keeping track of pupils' progress and letting them know how they can do better is becoming increasingly effective.

Senior staff have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and what needs to be tackled. They are committed to improvement. In this, they enjoy the support of the school's staff, the governing body and the local authority (LA).

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance, particularly in Year 11.
- Improve marking and ensure that tasks set enable teachers to assess where understanding is not secure.
- Improve quality assurance by strengthening middle management.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils joining the school have achieved a wide range of standards in national tests at age 11, but there are fewer high attaining pupils than in most comprehensive schools.

They make generally satisfactory progress in their first three years at the school. The results of national tests in English, mathematics and science at age 14 are much as would be expected, given pupils' starting points, though science results for the last two years have been slightly lower.

GCSE results were strong in 2005, but fell back a little in 2006. Overall, the more recent results are as might normally be expected from the standards pupils had reached when they were younger. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more passes at grade C or above was 38%; for 32%, this included English and mathematics. However, several subjects had weak results both in 2005 and 2006. With some, this is due to intractable staffing difficulties, including long term illness. Occasionally, it is the outcome of weak teaching. At GCSE, boys tend to do better relative to girls than they do nationally.

In lessons seen, pupils were usually making good progress and responded well to teaching that engaged their interest. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make as much progress as others. Pupils do not learn effectively in some French lessons and this is reflected in low examination results.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development is satisfactory. The school is an orderly community. Between lessons and at lunch and break times, pupils behave and mix well together. They are friendly and courteous to visitors. A small minority of pupils and parents have concerns about bullying, and the behaviour of some pupils in lessons, but overall behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is well below average. The attendance of Year 11 pupils, both currently and in the last academic year, is poor. This problem has not been tackled with sufficient urgency. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available after school. Sports College status makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development through the encouragement of healthy lifestyles, providing good role models in teaching and learning, and through raising pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils make good contributions to the school and wider community. They are very generous in raising money for good causes, for example, cancer research and the Bethany Project. Opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility, for instance, as senior students or members of the school council, are satisfactory. However, pupils say they would like to do more to help in the day-to-day running of the school. There are good links with local police and fire services, for example, through the Firebreak Pilot Programme with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Improving teaching and learning is central to the school's improvement plan. This is having a positive effect on the strategic planning that many teachers undertake in preparation for lessons. A substantial amount of the teaching is good but there are inconsistencies between subjects that affect pupils' overall progress and learning. At best, pupils respond well to the fast pace of lessons; a diverse range of activities fully engages their interest and strong discipline is established through respect for teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. Pupils then know what is expected of them, respond well and seek the teachers' advice only when they have tried out the work for themselves individually or in collaboration with others. In these lessons, teachers continually assess pupils' work and show them how to improve. They involve pupils in self-assessment, which draws them into their own learning. Pupils make least, and occasionally unsatisfactory, progress in lessons where expectations are low and the poor behaviour of a minority distracts others.

Overall, the presentation of pupils' written work is poor; it is often incomplete. Marking is inconsistent; it does not inform pupils sufficiently about what they need to do to improve their work further. Some teachers use information from assessment well to inform lesson plans and to build on pupils' prior learning, but this aspect of teaching is not fully embedded in individual subjects of the curriculum. The overall quality of teaching is affected by instability in staffing in a few subjects, notably in the humanities and mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is well designed, with pupils' individual needs at its heart. The curriculum has evolved in the last few years, and continues to do so. It is broad and engaging in academic and practical subjects, as well as being sensitive to pupils' personal development. The 'Space' course in Years 7 to 9 is particularly good: pupils are benefiting from understanding the learning methods and study skills that suit them best, and from reflective discussion about the problems that face them as maturing teenagers in a challenging society. The school provides equally well for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The quality of provision is inadequate in modern foreign languages; it is not engaging pupils' interest sufficiently or stimulating enthusiasm. Provision for sport is good, as is expected of a Sports College, though there is still a shortage of resources, for example, for athletics.

A small range of high quality vocational courses is offered in Years 10 and 11. These are delivered well, mainly through a local consortium of schools, business enterprise and a further education college. Pupils are guided onto the courses through careful consultation between the pupil, parents and staff. Hence, pupils' learning is being invigorated by bringing the applied skills of the workplace into the 14–19 curriculum,

for example, in construction and catering. There is some good additional provision for gifted and talented pupils, for instance, in science. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities, not just in sport but across a broad spectrum. Pupils' involvement is particularly impressive when used to bring leisure and pleasure to adults in the local community, for example, through the performing arts.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for and receive good personal support. Links between home and school are strong but a minority of parents fail to ensure their children attend regularly. Pupils generally feel safe in school though a minority say that there is occasional bullying. However, all are confident that they have a teacher they can turn to if personal help is needed. Relationships between teachers and pupils are supportive and encouraging, and help motivate pupils to want to learn. Risk assessments are carried out in line with legislation, as are the requirements to ensure the safeguarding of pupils. Governors and senior leaders monitor the site at regular intervals for health and safety hazards. Links with external agencies are good, and effectively support all groups of pupils, particularly looked after and vulnerable pupils.

The reorganisation of the provision for pupils with learning or physical difficulties has ensured that pupils now receive good support and make satisfactory progress. There are good links with partner primary schools and colleges of further education. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils know their individual target grades. However, marking and assessment, to establish what they can do and show them how to improve, are inconsistent across subjects.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The present headteacher took up her post in September 2005, after a year as acting headteacher. New appointments have been made to the senior leadership team. The headteacher's leadership is strong and effective and much has been accomplished over the last year or two. For example, inadequate arrangements for pupils with special needs have been put on a much better footing, and the system for tracking pupils' progress is being improved. Behaviour is managed firmly. Headway in this small school has been handicapped by the promotion of several key staff to posts elsewhere, and by instances of long term staff absence due to ill health. Therefore, it was not possible to consolidate the improvement in standards evident in the 2005 GCSE results. There is developing good practice in monitoring teaching quality but quality control of marking needs improvement. A number of subjects where provision is weak have been grouped in one faculty with a view to ensuring quality control. With some subjects, departmental management is currently insecure, or managers are new to the task.

The senior leadership team has a clear and convincing evaluation of how things stand and what needs to be done. The views of parents and pupils are sought in appraising the school's work. Teaching staff support the headteacher's drive for improvement,

and the LA has provided effective guidance to staff at all levels in order to secure effective practice. The school needs continuing support from the LA to address adroitly remaining refractory issues of teaching quality. The school's undertakings as a specialist Sports College have been led with vision, vigour and commitment. Governors are perceptive and persistent in their support and encouragement, and have ensured, over many years, that wise counsel prevails. There has been satisfactory development since the last inspection. At the present time, the school gives satisfactory value for money. It has good capacity for further improvement.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Worden Sports College

Westfield Drive

Leyland

Lancashire

PR25 1QX

18 January 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Worden Sports College, 16 January 2007

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited the school. We found out a lot about the school by talking with you in discussion groups, in lessons and around the school.

We think the Worden Sports College provides you with a satisfactory education, and many of the things it does are good. GCSE results were very good in 2005. More recently, GCSE results and test results at age 14 show that you make satisfactory progress. Most of the lessons we saw were well taught and you were keen to do well; very occasionally, things could have been better and some of you could have been more cooperative. Though there have been difficulties in staffing with teachers changing jobs, and some staff away with illness, teaching has generally been satisfactory overall. Most of you enjoy school and get on well together. Behaviour around the school is satisfactory and often good. You are well looked after, and the school provides a good range of courses. The headteacher and the senior staff are good at managing what are sometimes difficult situations, and are doing their best to make the school even better.

We think the school should improve some things.

- Attendance should be better, particularly in Year 11. Some of you need to make more effort to get to school unless you are really ill.
- Some of the things you do for homework could be more challenging. Teachers could then help you more when they mark your work by picking up things you do not understand.
- With staff changes and other difficulties, organisation for some subjects could be better.

You are fortunate to be in a school that is generally effective. Most of you do your best to make the school successful and to gain the skills you need for your future life. Keep up your good efforts.

Yours sincerely

Jim Bennetts

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools