



# The Banovallum School, Horncastle

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120650  
**Local Authority** LINCOLNSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 291815  
**Inspection dates** 15–16 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Cragg HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Modern (non-selective)	<b>School address</b>	Boston Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Horncastle
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		Lincolnshire LN9 6DA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01507522232
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	581	<b>Fax number</b>	01507522752
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rev Jonathan Hustler
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Carroll
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–16	15–16 November 2006	291815

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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

The Banovallum School is a modern (non selective) school serving the small town of Horncastle and surrounding area where selection of up to 40% of students for grammar schools takes place. The school has grown substantially in the last five years but is still much smaller than average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. However, the proportions of students with statements of special educational needs (SEN) and on the school's SEN register are above average. The school has a designated unit with 17 places for students with general learning difficulties. There are few students from minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language (EAL). The school has had joint science specialist status with the local grammar school since 2003.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its students with some particular areas of strength. Inspectors' judgements closely match the school's evaluation of its work except for leadership and management and overall effectiveness which the school judged to be good but inspectors found to be satisfactory. The strategies implemented recently, while bringing about improvements particularly at Key Stage 3, are not yet ensuring sufficiently good progress for all students. The school's evaluation of its performance is satisfactory. Standards improved at all levels in 2006 and are now above average by the end of Year 9 and just below average by the end of Year 11. Students make good progress to the end of Year 9 and satisfactory progress by the end of Year 11. Despite recent improvements in both English and mathematics results at GCSE, too few students currently achieve five higher grades including both of these subjects.

Students' personal development and well-being are good. They show respect for each other and behave well. Most students have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy taking on responsibility and are very well prepared for their future working lives. Relationships in the school are strong and this enables students to feel secure. Students' spiritual, moral and social development is good although they have too few opportunities to experience other cultures directly. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There are some outstanding examples of teaching and learning but, as yet, there is not enough consistency across the school to ensure that all students make good progress. Teachers are beginning to use assessment effectively to inform their planning and track students' progress but this work is still in the development stage and is not yet used effectively by all.

Curriculum provision is good. Courses are carefully matched to students' needs and partnerships with vocational providers, local businesses and other organisations are excellent. The school's specialist science status has contributed effectively to improvements in attainment. Students receive good care, support and guidance with very good provision for vulnerable students and outstanding provision for careers education and work-related learning. Parents comment positively on the work of the school and appreciate the care and commitment of staff.

The headteacher and relatively new senior team set a clear direction for the school, have implemented strong systems for monitoring performance, and manage their areas of responsibility well. These good monitoring systems are used by subject leaders with varying degrees of effectiveness so practice is inconsistent, especially in the quality of evaluation of progress and the impact of any action taken. Governors discharge their statutory duties well and are committed to the success of the school.

However, their systems for holding the school to account are insufficiently developed. The school has made good progress on most of the key issues identified in the last inspection. The recent improvement in systems for monitoring performance, increased emphasis on assessment and rising standards indicate that there is good capacity to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Improve students' rate of progress at Key Stage 4 to ensure an increase in the proportion achieving at least five higher grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment to match the best practice seen in the school.
- Ensure that procedures for monitoring performance and evaluating progress are implemented consistently.
- Increase opportunities for students to have experience of other cultures.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Students' achievement is satisfactory. They enter the school with attainment which is below average, particularly in English and mathematics, with fewer than average having achieved the highest levels on leaving primary school. By the end of Year 9, students' standards, which improved substantially in 2006, are above average. By the end of Year 11, students attain standards which are broadly average compared to similar schools but below average in comparison to all schools. The school's targets in science and mathematics, set as part of its specialist status, have been reached or surpassed in the last two years. Standards in the core subjects are improving but, as yet, too few students achieve five higher passes at GCSE including English and mathematics. Students make good progress to the end of Year 9 and this confirms the improvements made recently. By the end of Year 11, students' progress is satisfactory. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and other specific needs, make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students attend regularly and behave well. They move around the school in a considerate manner, and are courteous to one another and to staff and visitors. Students feel safe, confident that their concerns are listened to and that rare cases of bullying are swiftly dealt with. They have positive attitudes in lessons. Their spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection. Very good examples of this were seen in their reflection during school assembly and, in a history lesson, in their readiness to empathise with the predicament of soldiers in the First World War. The small number of students from minority ethnic groups is integrated well but there are not enough opportunities to prepare all students for living in a multi-ethnic society.

Students increasingly develop self-confidence and initiative. Their social development is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and an excellent programme of visits, which includes several organised by the students themselves. Many students make a valuable contribution to the school community by taking responsibility as form representatives, peer listeners and prefects. The school council is effective in

representing students' views and improving the learning environment. As a result of broad vocational choices, work-related learning opportunities and strong links with businesses, colleges and the local grammar school, students are extremely well prepared for their future employment. The school's recent successful 'healthy living' initiative is reflected in high rates of participation in sport and in students' positive response to the change to a healthier lunch-time menu.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Although many lessons seen by inspectors were good, there was wide variation in the quality of lessons observed. Overall, students made satisfactory progress. In the best lessons, teachers planned well and set clear learning objectives. They made good use of resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards, to enhance teaching and learning. Teachers challenged students' thinking through good question and answer sessions which required explanations and justification of ideas. They had high expectations for their students' learning. Students were well motivated and completed their tasks enthusiastically. Teachers have particularly good rapport with the students. However, in the weaker lessons, teaching methods did not sufficiently engage learners; the level of challenge was insufficient and there was a tendency for students to be passive recipients of, rather than active participants in, their own learning.

Marking is inconsistent between subjects and within departments. Some students know their targets and are systematically given clear advice about how they can improve their work. But this is not universally the case. Assessment procedures are well set out, and some teachers make good use of assessment information to plan suitably challenging work and set targets for all groups of students. However, this is not yet sufficiently embedded in the general practice of the school to ensure that all students make good progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all students well. In Years 7 to 9, it provides a broad and balanced range of activities. In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum complies with statutory requirements, while effectively meeting the diverse aspirations of students. It does this successfully by linking with local further education colleges, its 'specialist college' partner and other organisations to offer alternative routes for students. GCSE subjects are, therefore, augmented by a very good range of work-related subjects. There is also an increasing emphasis on enterprise education. The curriculum thus prepares students very effectively for the next stage of their learning and, eventually, for employment. Very few students do not continue in either education or employment at 16. The school's specialist status has improved opportunities to use

information and communication technology and is improving attainment in science and mathematics. Education for health and safety is good. Opportunities for enrichment are varied and well supported. They contribute effectively to students' self confidence and learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support for students are good. Requirements for child protection are properly fulfilled and risk assessments are rigorously carried out. Very good contact has been established with primary schools to ensure that transition to secondary school causes minimal disruption; younger students spoke appreciatively of the ease with which they had changed schools. Support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and other specific needs is very good, resulting in many achieving beyond their anticipated levels of attainment. One pupil regarded the 'kindness and care' with which these pupils are treated as a strength of the school. Teachers' use of assessment and tracking systems to ensure that all pupils achieve their targets is improving and good programmes are in place to support identified pupils in Years 9 and 11.

Careers education, an outstanding feature of the school's provision, is systematically taught in association with a number of outside agencies. Along with work experience and work-related learning, this ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and new senior team set a clear vision for the school with a strong focus on raising achievement and offering a curriculum which meets the needs of all students. Senior staff have well-defined roles and provide good management of their areas of responsibility. The school's systems for monitoring its performance and evaluating its progress are satisfactory. Senior staff set clear guidelines and routines which are increasingly used effectively by some, but not yet all, subject leaders. The leadership and management of subjects are satisfactory. Key priorities are accurately identified and translated into detailed development plans. However, the criteria used to indicate success are too often not capable of being measured and this hampers effective judgement of progress. There are excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges, businesses and other agencies which extend the curriculum, provide additional support for students and prepare them very well for their future working lives. The school's partnership with the local grammar school in its specialist status has stimulated development and provided good opportunities for collaboration. The school is very committed to success for all its students.

Governors are very committed and carry out their statutory responsibilities thoroughly. However, their systems for holding the school to account are not yet sufficiently rigorous. Staff and resources are deployed effectively and finances are efficiently

managed. There is good capacity to improve further based on the recent improvement in standards and progress.





## 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?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	1

### 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	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

17 November 2006

Dear students

The Banovallum School, Boston Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, LN9 6DA

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. First, I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your co-operation during our visit. We greatly appreciated your comments and enjoyed meeting with some of you to discuss your views of the school.

The inspection found that your school provides a satisfactory education with some particular strengths. Results in Year 9 improved substantially in 2006 and are above average with most students making good progress. By the end of Year 11 results are just below average and students' progress is satisfactory. You behave well and most of you attend regularly and have positive attitudes to lessons. You treat each other with respect and told us that you feel safe at school. The teaching you receive is often good but there is not yet enough consistency for your progress to be routinely good. In some lessons you are expected to listen rather than discuss what you are learning. In some subjects you receive detailed comments to help you improve your work and know how well you are doing against your targets. However, this varies too much from subject to subject.

You have a very good range of courses to choose from in Year 10 and the links with colleges and other schools are excellent. You also benefit from a good range of trips and activities. We were impressed by your efforts in the house and school councils. The guidance you receive in careers is very strong and, generally, teachers give you good support.

There are some aspects of the school's work that need to improve further. Although you make good progress by the end of Year 9, this needs to continue into Years 10 and 11, particularly in achieving higher grades in both English and mathematics. We want to see all the teaching you receive match the best examples that we saw. We have asked subject leaders to be more consistent in the way that they monitor the work in their areas to ensure that you continue to make progress. We also felt that you would benefit from opportunities to see different cultures and religions through more trips and activities.

We are confident that your school will continue to improve and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg

Her Majesty's Inspector