



# Barlby High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 121708  
**Local Authority** North Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 292210  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Maddison 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>   | York Road               |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community          |                         | Barlby, Selby           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 11–16              |                         | North Yorkshire YO8 5JP |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01757 706161            |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 690                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01757 213699            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Mr S Rhodes             |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Reverend Francis Loftus |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 10 September 2001  |                         |                         |

|                  |                         |                          |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b> | <b>Inspection dates</b> | <b>Inspection number</b> |
| 11–16            | 23–24 November 2006     | 292210                   |

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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

Barlby High School is situated in a coalfield closure area. It serves Barlby and seven neighbouring villages. Just under two thirds of students come to school each day by bus. Whereas the proportion of students entitled to free school meals is well below the national average, the proportion of students with statements of special educational need is above the national average. The school's population is almost entirely White British. At present the school has six looked-after children and four Traveller children. It has been a Specialist Sports College since September 2004.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Barlby High School provides a satisfactory standard of education and enables students to make satisfactory progress. Pastoral care is a particular strength and it ensures good personal development and well-being for the students. The curriculum is also a strength especially at Key Stage 4. Sports College status is enabling the school to offer a wealth of opportunities for the students and for the partner schools and the wider community. There are very productive links with post-16 providers and students receive good guidance about their options after GCSE.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are above the national averages at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The 2006 GCSE results were disappointing but the school has reacted to deal with this and initiatives are in place to improve standards. Teaching is satisfactory. The lessons seen were typically well organised and planned. The effectiveness of teaching varies and in several lessons teachers' expectations and students' aspirations were not high enough.

The school provides a safe and secure environment in which students feel valued and well cared for. Students enjoy coming to school and participate in a good range of high quality enrichment activities. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and attitudes to learning are also good. Students contribute well to the life of the school and to the wider community. Parents are generally happy with the quality of education, care and support provided. Vulnerable students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, looked-after children and Traveller children, are particularly well supported. Students make good progress in their personal and social development and the care, guidance and support provided is of a high quality.

Leaders and managers share a strong commitment to the school and it has the capacity to make further improvements. Considerable emphasis has been placed upon personal development and pastoral care and these are significant strengths of the school. A greater sense of urgency is now required to achieve more consistency of practice and expectation from senior and middle leaders and managers, better teaching and higher standards.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make the raising of aspirations, achievement and standards the priority of the school.
- Improve teaching and learning to ensure that:

good practice is spread across all departments

there is appropriate expectation and challenge in all lessons

learning outcomes and lesson objectives are explicit

students understand clearly how they could do better.

- Improve leadership and management to ensure that there is greater consistency of practice and expectation across the school at all levels, especially in relation to tracking students' progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The achievement of students is satisfactory. On entry in Year 7 attainment is above average and results in examinations at the end of Year 9 show that students make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3. Students have performed better in mathematics and science than they have in English but strategies have been put in place to raise standards in this subject. In most years GCSE results are above average but in 2006 the proportion of students achieving five A\* to C grades was disappointing. The school's cogent analysis of these results, however, the improvement programme which has been subsequently put in place and the new tracking system indicate that the weaknesses identified are being tackled.

The standards reached by students at Key Stage 3 and at GCSE have been above the national average for several years. There is, however, a mixed picture at GCSE with variation in results across subjects. This reflects some of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and subject leadership. The students have positive attitudes to learning and they are willing to be engaged. In response teachers need to have higher expectations for students' achievement. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make at least satisfactory progress in their learning.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of the students is good. Students enjoy school and their attendance is good. Overall, behaviour is good and exclusions are rare. Students have positive attitudes to learning and are willing to work. The general atmosphere in the school is relaxed and students behave safely and sensibly in lessons and around the school. They particularly appreciate the value of being part of a small community where they know everyone. Students are generally thoughtful and polite to each other and to visitors. They feel safe in school and when called upon to act responsibly, for example through the school council, they do so willingly. They are keen to contribute to the life of the school and community, for example, through fundraising for charities and this helps them to appreciate the needs of others. They acquire knowledge and skills for future life through a very well planned work-related curriculum and one of the benefits of the sports college status is to make students more aware of healthy lifestyles.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is satisfactory, with some strengths in, for example, creativity through art and understanding of other cultures. The school could do more, though, to extend social development during lunchtime, when few students sit at tables and many walk around eating. There are

also some missed opportunities to extend students' appreciation of ideas beyond the essential learning of the curriculum. The current link with a school in Tanzania, however, is providing an important opportunity to enhance the cultural development of the students.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, though much of the teaching seen was good and some, notably in history, mathematics and physical education was outstanding. In the most effective lessons students are given a clear focus for the lesson and for the outcomes of their learning which are referred back to frequently. There are a variety of tasks which are well suited to students' needs and the pace of learning is appropriate. A well-planned series of structured tasks enable students to meet clear and challenging expectations. This results in motivated and interested students who are fully engaged in their learning.

There are, however, a significant number of lessons in which work is not sufficiently closely matched to students' learning needs. Lesson planning is not always focused on outcomes, lesson objectives are not always explicit and the level of challenge is not always high enough to match students' abilities. The quality and effectiveness of marking varies too. In some subjects teachers give helpful evaluation of the students' work and clear pointers for improvement. Marking of this quality was seen in English and history but it has not been shared across departments. As a result teaching does not always build effectively upon what students know and do.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is generally good. The statutory omissions identified at the last inspection have been rectified. As a Specialist Sports College the school provides a balanced curriculum but places an appropriate emphasis on sport, for example, ensuring all students take part in at least two hours of high quality physical activity every week. Sports College status is having a positive impact and the enthusiasm of the students is reflected in the high levels of uptake in enrichment activities outside the school day.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is flexible and is adapted to meet individual needs. It reflects the strengths of personal development and care and guidance within the school. The procedures for work-related learning are outstanding and the well-established relationships with employers in the local community enhance this provision. The impact of these arrangements has yet to be fully evaluated but there are strong indications that students are being well prepared for their future once they leave this school.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for the students is good. Pastoral care is strong and the heads of year work effectively and with commitment to support the students. Care for the individual is paramount in this school and it rightly prides itself on the effective way it provides for students with particular needs and talents. Students who have failed to cope with life in other schools succeed here because the school is sensitive to them and willing to adapt the curriculum to suit individual circumstances and needs. Care and support for looked-after children and for Traveller children are very effective and strengths of the school.

Good support is offered to all students in Year 11 through mentors, some of whom are non-teachers, who advise on learning skills and revision techniques. Students benefit from good careers advice and from mock interviews with local employers. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified accurately and they are well supported by skilled teaching assistants. Risk assessments are rigorous and child protection regulations are fully met. The school is seen by parents as accessible and they are surveyed regularly to check their views. The parental response to the inspection questionnaire indicates a high level of support for the school's work.

The academic guidance for students has not been as effective as the pastoral guidance and the school has already taken remedial steps. It has identified the weaknesses in its previous system for tracking students' progress. New arrangements have been introduced this year to support students in their learning. The impact of this new system is not yet clear for it is early days. Initial indications, though, are encouraging in that it will allow the school to identify those students who are underachieving at an early stage and to take effective action promptly.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher places great weight on personal development and on care and support for students and these are undoubted strengths of the school. He is ably supported by a determined senior leadership team and a dedicated staff. Governors meet regularly and are very supportive of the school. They understand their role and are prepared to ask challenging questions. They are rightly concerned about the limitations of the accommodation and the condition of the building. The school's finances are managed carefully and efficiently, resulting in good value for money.

The headteacher allows considerable freedom to senior and middle leaders to develop their areas of responsibility. Although this has given individuals the opportunity to implement initiatives, monitoring is uneven. It needs to be more systematic and underpinned by clear agreed parameters. The school is aware of this and is addressing this issue. There is dedication to the continuing professional development of all staff and innovative plans are in place to train middle leaders. Leadership and management

within departments are being revitalised. Sometimes this has been facilitated by staff changes or by the skilful realignment of responsibilities. Self-evaluation is developing as middle leaders in particular become more skilled at the process.

Overall leadership is becoming more proactive. It increasingly appreciates the importance of scanning the horizon and identifying what needs to be done at an early stage. This is particularly so in relation to achievement and standards and the revised 'early warning system' for tracking student progress is an example of this approach.



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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> |
|---|-----------------------|

### 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  | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 3   |
| 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   | 2 |
| 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>                           | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |

### 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  | 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

As you are all aware I led the team of inspectors which recently visited your school and, on behalf of the team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We greatly appreciated the time you spent talking to us and we found your comments very helpful. As well as looking at your work we read the questionnaires completed by your parents. They were very supportive of the school.

We think that the education you receive at Barlby High School is satisfactory and your school has some good features.

- You told us that you enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure and that your teachers care for you. We agree and we judge your personal development and the care, guidance and support you receive to be real strengths of the school.
- Sports College status is providing a range of exciting opportunities and you are making the most of them. This is pleasing to see as is the school's sharing of the benefits of the Sports College status with your partner primary and secondary schools and the wider community even in Tanzania!
- You are well behaved in lessons and around the school and you have good attitudes to learning.
- You have a good curriculum, there is a wide range of options for you at Key Stage 4 and the work-related learning arrangements for you are outstanding.

You are working at a standard that is above average but, because you are already ahead when you start this school, we think you could do even better. We have asked the staff and governors to help you raise your aspirations to achieve higher standards by making sure that:

- all lessons are as good as the very best we saw when we were in the school
- the learning objectives and outcomes of each lesson are made very clear
- you know how well you are doing and how you can improve
- your progress is tracked carefully so that if you are in danger of underachieving you will be given the support you need soon enough.

It is not just up to your teachers, though, for you have your part to play! We want you to aim high, to take responsibility for your learning, to listen to their advice and to always try your best.

We very much enjoyed visiting your school and I would like to thank you once again for being so friendly and polite.

I wish you all every success in the future.