

# Waverley School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103481
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	302305
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Davinder Dosanjh HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	736
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anjid Riaz
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kamal Hanis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Hob Moor Road Small Heath Birmingham B10 9BT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4641780
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4647479

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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

Waverley is a smaller than average secondary school. It gained specialist status in humanities in September 2006. The school serves an area of high deprivation. There is a cultural and ethnic mix of students. The majority of students are from either Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds. Over 80% of students use English as an additional language. More than half of the students are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Waverley School is a good school and serves its students well. Good care, guidance and support promote an environment where there is a very strong ethos of helping all students to develop and achieve. Students feel safe, enjoy school and feel well supported. Behaviour is good and students are polite. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection following the implementation of a number of effective strategies and it is now satisfactory.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Diversity days make a strong contribution to the curriculum and good personal development and well-being of students. Students reflect very positively on their experience during these days and say they are among the best things about school. The curriculum is broad and flexible and meets the needs of students well. Specialist status in humanities has enabled the school to offer more options at Key Stage 4 and develop good citizenship-related email networks with primary schools.

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average. The students come into the school with low levels of attainment. While standards are still low at Key Stage 3, they have improved, notably in mathematics and science. The percentage of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE is well above average. The school's efforts to improve achievement have been successful, for example through the introduction of vocational courses and supplementary booster, revision and coursework sessions. Teaching assistants and non-teaching support managers provide good personalised support to enable students to achieve. While the standards attained in English have been improving, the proportion achieving A\* to C grades at GCSE is low. The vast majority of students use English as an additional language and the school has focused on developing written and spoken English. The implementation of literacy for learning strategies is inconsistent across subjects. Assessment is not always used effectively to target extra support in English for those students who need it. This limits some students' GCSE results.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. They have been a primary focus of school improvement, which has ensured that lesson planning is good. Good practice does not extend to ensuring consistency in areas such as literacy development and questioning techniques. The quality of marking is variable and, overall, it is not sufficiently helpful to students.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. He has a clear overview of how to move the school forward and gets things done. He is well supported by the senior leadership team and middle managers who share the same vision. Staff are very committed and enthusiastic. The school has put in place a number of well thought out strategies to improve performance but it has not fully evaluated the impact of these. Governance is outstanding; governors support and challenge the school exceptionally well.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in addressing the areas identified for improvement. There is a good capacity to improve further which is demonstrated by rigorous monitoring of performance and tackling any areas of underperformance. Value for money is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring greater consistency of specific features such as literacy development and questioning techniques.
- Improve the quality of marking so students have subject specific advice on what to do to improve.

- Improve achievement in English at Key Stage 4 by better use of assessment and targeted intervention.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students enter the school with attainment well below average and make good progress by the end of Year 11. Standards at Key Stage 3 are well below average but have continued to improve since 2002. Mathematics and science, in particular, have shown significant improvements. Performance in English has been more static. By the end of Year 9, all students make good progress in all core subjects.

Standards have improved considerably at Key stage 4. The proportion of students who achieve five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE is well above the national average, being 72% in 2006. The introduction of courses that better match the needs of students, for example vocational courses in science and information and communication technology (ICT), have helped to raise standards. There is a great deal of variation in the results achieved by different subjects at GCSE. Students taking GCSE and AS level examinations early are very successful, for example, in religious education. The proportion of students achieving an A\* to C grade at GCSE in mathematics has improved year on year. In English, however, this proportion is low. The school has taken considerable steps to improve the results in GCSE English and the current progress of students is much better than in previous years.

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress and benefit from the good support they receive. The school sets challenging targets and they have been met at Key Stage 4 but not all targets have been achieved in Key Stage 3.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Typically, students' behaviour is good. Students get on well with one another and are very polite to visitors. The school has worked hard to achieve this by reinforcing the importance of good behaviour and by bringing in a variety of rewards for good behaviour, as well as maintaining appropriate sanctions. Students say that the school is a safe and friendly place to be and that, if there are any difficulties between students, they are dealt with effectively. The school has recently made changes to the tutor group system with a view to further improving relationships between younger and older students.

Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good, with diversity days making a particularly strong contribution, engaging students' interest through art, dance and drama. Students have a good understanding of health issues and the school has made sure that the canteen offers a good range of healthy food. There is a good time allocation for sport for younger students, and the take-up for GCSE physical education is high. Students' attendance has improved significantly over the last year. It is now close to the national average. This has been achieved by good use of attendance data with students and parents, good use of rewards and by extensive input from the student support managers, including many home visits.

Students have a good and developing range of opportunities to take responsibility, for example as prefects, peer mentors and members of the 'eco' committee. The school council has played an active role in improving the school, for example through the establishment of a prayer room. Students benefit from a well organised two week programme of work experience which provides

a good insight into the skills and qualities needed in the workplace. The school recognises that it has more to do to promote financial awareness and enterprise skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Lessons are generally well planned and teachers know their subjects well. The initial activities at the start of lessons are often stimulating and ensure students are immediately on task. Students are given opportunities to work individually and in pairs or groups so that they can learn from each other. The relationships between students and teachers are good and students enjoy their lessons. They generally behave well. In a few lessons, however, there is an undercurrent of non-work-related chatter that detracts from students' learning. This occurs when the lesson lacks pace or the task is insufficiently interesting to engage students fully. Students with learning difficulties or disabilities receive appropriate intervention and support and so make good progress. Teachers' approach to literacy development is inconsistent and this impedes some students' progress. Lesson plans usually make reference to extension work for more able students but this does not always translate into practice.

Teachers know the levels and grades students are working at and if they are making sufficient progress. Most students know how well they are doing. In the most effective lessons, students are given opportunities to reflect on their own and each other's work and say how it can be improved. Marking in some students' books does not contain comments in sufficient detail to inform students on what they need to do specifically to improve their work. Questioning to probe levels of understanding of individual students is used inconsistently.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The broad range of courses meets the needs of all students. Students are very positive about the choices available and appreciate opportunities to study, for example, a variety of languages in Year 7 and law at GCSE. The school now offers increased flexibility and students can take examinations early or follow A-level courses. Recent positive changes to vocational and work-related learning have resulted in clear routes of progression for students choosing these options. All students are taught how to remain healthy and safe and they appreciate and take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. The school's specialist humanities status has had a marked impact on the curriculum. During the popular diversity days, students explore exciting and memorable aspects of cultural identity, supported by members of the community. As a result, they are proud to regard themselves as local and global citizens. The development of literacy across the curriculum is an area for improvement.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support which have a direct impact on raising the achievement of students. Students with learning difficulties or disabilities have their learning needs accurately diagnosed and are very well supported by teaching assistants in the classroom, helping them to make good progress.

Working together, the student support managers and mentors offer personalised support to students who may be underachieving. This close level of support has also helped to improve levels of attendance. A significant strength in the school is the quality of links with parents, which is reflected in the very high attendance at academic review days. The inclusion unit offers a good targeted programme of support for younger students to help improve social skills and levels of self-confidence. Where appropriate, the school makes good use of external agencies to provide further support in these areas. The quality of careers guidance is good, and the great majority of students either continue with their education or find full-time employment.

The way in which students' academic progress is tracked has improved. The school recognises that it still has more to do to link together the useful data they have on students' academic progress and personal development in order to plan and target extra support in the most effective way.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Effective self-evaluation has led to a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. School management at all levels has prioritised the raising of attainment through improving teaching. The senior leadership team have ensured that teaching has been strengthened through a rigorous monitoring and support programme. Although the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, there are clear indicators that many aspects of teaching have improved and have had a direct impact on raising standards. The senior management team have generated a culture of sustained improvement for teaching that is supported by good quality professional development. Both senior and middle managers share the same aspirations for the school and its students and are very supportive of each other.

The governance of the school is outstanding. Governors support the management of the school wholeheartedly and challenge the senior management team with vigour on key issues to promote the best possible provision for the students. The governors have supported the senior management team with the rationalisation of staffing and with the successful humanities specialist college application. The specialist status has resulted in improved community links with other schools and businesses in the area and a greater involvement of parents in their children's education.

Since the previous inspection, standards of behaviour have improved. Support for students with learning difficulties or disabilities has improved through the appointment of specifically trained teaching assistants. Attendance has improved and a programme of collective acts of worship is now in place.

Parents are generally pleased and satisfied with the school although a small minority feel that the school does not take into account their children's views as much as it should.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	2
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>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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	3
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	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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	2
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	1
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

Dear Students

Inspection of Waverley School, Birmingham B10 9BT

I would like to thank you for the welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we visited your school recently. Thank you for talking with us and giving us your views. I particularly enjoyed watching some of you rehearsing for the 'Bugsy' production. Good luck with the show!

You are right to be proud of your school. Inspectors have judged the school to be good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has helped the school move forward. He gets things done. He is well supported by his managers. You feel safe and enjoy school. Your behaviour is good. Attendance has improved. You make good progress in most subjects. GCSE results are generally high, but not so good in English.

The school provides good care and guidance to help you to do well, including individual help from teaching assistants and support managers. You say the diversity days are among the best things about school. The school's specialist status in humanities has allowed you to have a wider choice of options at Key Stage 4. The school has given high priority to improving the quality of the lessons you receive and there are an increasing number of good lessons. Governors do an outstanding job in supporting and challenging the school to ensure the best provision for you.

There are some things that the school can do to become better. We have asked the headteacher and senior managers to:

- improve the quality of lessons by making sure there is more focus on features such as literacy development and questioning techniques
- improve the quality of marking so you know what to do to improve for each subject
- improve progress and results in English at GCSE.

The headteacher and senior managers make a good team. They have a clear view of how the school is doing and where they can make improvements. The managers, teachers, governors and staff are very committed to their work. We encourage you to continue to support the school and play your part in making it even better. On behalf of the inspection team, may I wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Davinder Dosanjh Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools