

Grange Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107414
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	309396
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Jan Bennett HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1818
6th form	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Donna Pankhurst
Headteacher	Mr Paul Burluraux
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Haycliffe Lane Bradford West Yorkshire BD5 9ET
Telephone number	01274 775335
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Introduction

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

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards in 2007; teaching and learning; personal development and well-being; care, guidance and support; and aspects of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, managers and students; observations of teaching and learning; and checking students' work and school documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation report, were not accurate. These have been included in this report where appropriate.

Description of the school

Grange Technology College is a larger than average school in Bradford. Many of the students are from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and the proportion of students eligible for free school meals is very high. Over 90% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and just under 90% have a first language other than English. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is around average, but almost a third of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proximity of Muslim girls' schools means that the proportion of girls at Grange is lower than average. The school has specialist provision for 12 students with autistic spectrum disorders. Grange was awarded specialist technology college status in 2001.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Grange is an outstanding school. It provides students from a very disadvantaged area of the city with a safe, inclusive and vibrant learning environment. Students' attainment on entry to the school is very low, but they make significantly better progress than expected and standards are rising. Students who were spoken to say that they feel safer in school than anywhere else. Teaching is excellent and students respond with an enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. Care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. Students are set very challenging targets and the system for monitoring their progress is excellent and used well. Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Senior leadership is very strong and both operational and strategic management are very effective. Members of the leadership team work very well together and they have a clear vision for the school. There is a continuous drive for improvement and an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Achievement is outstanding. Students enter the school having attained very low standards at Key Stage 2, especially in English. The Key Stage 3 curriculum focuses on improving students' literacy and numeracy skills and the results from national tests at the end of Year 9 show that students make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Both girls and boys make significantly better progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 than students in similar schools. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. Standards are lower than average but they are rising. In 2007 the proportion of students achieving five GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including mathematics and English, rose by 6% to 34%. The proportion of girls achieving five GCSE passes at grades A* to C is now at the national average.

Personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour in and out of lessons is good and students treat each other with respect. Sixth formers say that behaviour has improved in recent years and is getting better all the time. Students enjoy being at school, they work well together and attendance is good. Students say that there are very few instances of bullying or racism and that any incidents are dealt with appropriately. Students know about the importance of healthy lifestyles and many take part in sporting activities. Students' contribution to the school community is developing well and student councils are increasingly proactive. Students have played a key role in developing the new behaviour policy and the rewards system. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good overall, but their awareness and appreciation of art, music and drama is fairly limited. The school is addressing the issue by organising visits to the theatre, for example.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers and students have very good working relationships that encourage learning. Students work hard in lessons, participate enthusiastically and are very keen to answer questions and share their ideas. Teachers' classroom management skills are very effective and they use a wide range of strategies that motivate students to learn. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to enhance learning and students have very good access to computers in and out of lessons. The effective use of assessment to support learning is widespread and well established.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. They are a major strength of the school and students rate the support that they receive very highly. A range of support staff give very high quality support to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works well with a wide range of external agencies to provide very effective, integrated support for the most vulnerable students. Staff working in the alternative curriculum centre and the social and

emotional behaviour unit are highly skilled and effective. Transition and induction arrangements are very good, particularly for vulnerable students. Careers guidance is very strong and students make very effective use of the high quality advice and information that is available to them when they are making option choices or preparing to leave school. All students are set very challenging targets and their progress is tracked closely. Targets are reviewed regularly and appropriate support is put in place quickly, if necessary. A wide range of academic support is available including extra sessions after school. Student support services are easily accessible to students and senior staff are highly visible on corridors at busy times during the day. As one student reported, 'There is always someone around to help'. Policies, systems and procedures for safeguarding and child protection are in place and meet government guidelines.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is constantly striving to achieve excellence and is supported well by a highly effective senior team. Together they monitor all aspects of the school's work very carefully and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very self-critical and leave no room for complacency. Governors know the school well and provide very strong support, but they are not afraid to raise issues or challenge managers if they think it is necessary. Robust action has been taken to successfully address weaknesses in middle management and to minimise the impact on students. Performance management is thorough. An excellent system is in place to track the progress of students and the system is also used by managers and teachers to monitor and compare the performance of different subjects and classes. This enables managers to take action quickly, if necessary. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored closely and a well-planned programme of support is provided if needed. There is effective sharing of good practice within and across departments. Accommodation is fairly cramped but it is well maintained and managed. Resources are deployed very effectively and the school provides outstanding value for money. Most parents are very supportive of the school.

Specialist status has had a positive impact on the school. All students take a GCSE course in a technology subject and they are able to choose from an increasing range of choices, but there is no vocational technology course on offer. The extremely challenging targets set for the school's specialist subjects, based on national standards, were not met in 2007. Enrichment activities such as 'hovercraft day' are used well to develop students' technology skills and have led to a higher number of students applying to study engineering at university.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Provision in the sixth form is outstanding. Achievement is very good and students make far better progress than expected. Overall, sixth formers have attained lower than average standards in Key Stage 4 but standards at Key Stage 5 are satisfactory. Sixth formers play an increasingly important role in the life of the school. Many act as 'ambassadors', providing support to parents at review days and school events whilst others have been trained as 'mentors' and offer regular support to a group of students in Year 7 or 8. They are excellent role models for younger students. Teaching and learning are outstanding and students are encouraged and enabled to look critically at their work in order to improve. There is a good range of courses on offer, including both academic and vocational courses at Levels 2 and 3. Students are set very challenging targets and their progress is monitored closely. They are supported very well and academic guidance is readily available. They receive high quality advice and guidance when applying for university. There is limited sixth form accommodation but sixth formers appreciate

the efforts that are made by managers to give them as much space as possible. The sixth form is led and managed very well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the vocational curriculum to include a technology option.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of the school. We enjoyed meeting you, seeing you at work and hearing your views. We would particularly like to thank the students who attended meetings with us. Grange Technology College is an outstanding school of which you can be justly proud.

Here is a summary of our findings which we hope will be of interest to you.

Achievement is outstanding across the school. You make far better progress than students in similar schools and although overall standards in national examinations are below average, they are improving. For example, the proportion of students getting five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including mathematics and English, rose by 6% last year.

Your behaviour in and out of lessons is good and you clearly enjoy school. You told us that there are few instances of bullying or racism and they are dealt with effectively. We were very pleased to see that you are contributing more and more to the school community. Peer mentors, for example, are offering valuable support to younger students and you are becoming increasingly involved in developing school policy.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons include a very good range of activities to motivate and engage you and you respond by working hard and showing a keen and lively interest. You have a good range of courses to choose from at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The care, guidance and support that you receive is of the very highest quality.

Mr Burlaux, his leadership team and the school governors are doing an excellent job and are constantly looking for ways to improve the school further.

We would like to congratulate you on being part of such a lively and inclusive school. We wish you well for the future.