

# Heaton Manor School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108531
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newcastle upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	309720
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Johnson 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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1914
6th form	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Martin O'Neill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Dryden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Jesmond Park West Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE7 7DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2818486
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2810381

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Heaton Manor is a large community comprehensive school situated in the eastern suburbs of Newcastle upon Tyne. In September 2004 the school re-opened in a new building. The school has grown in popularity and although most students live in the surrounding area, an increasing proportion travel to it from other parts of the city. More boys than girls attend the school, and the proportion of students whose first language is not English is slightly higher than the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs is below average. The school has specialist facilities to meet the needs of students with hearing impairment. Heaton Manor is a specialist computing and mathematics school and holds a second specialism in humanities. It is closely involved in the local authority Excellence in Cities programme and is part of a Leading Edge partnership. It was awarded Healthy Schools status in July 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Heaton Manor School provides a satisfactory level of education with a number of good features. The quality of the care and support, combined with a varied and interesting curriculum, result in students enjoying their school life and behaving responsibly. Attendance levels are above average. Students develop good attitudes to the community and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. There is a friendly atmosphere in this multi-cultural school, and all students here are valued and included in all aspects of school life. The sixth form is a real strength of the school because of its high rate of achievement. It provides students with a good progression route to higher education.

School leaders agreed with inspectors that academic achievement, and the quality of teaching and learning, are the key areas for improvement. Students make satisfactory progress in a high proportion of lessons. Some students are not sufficiently challenged and lessons do not always stretch the more able, or ensure that all students reach their full potential. Progress coaches have been introduced to measure and improve students' achievement. As a result, most students are now well aware of what standards they reach, but they are not as certain about what they need to do to improve. Teachers work hard, but there are times when they are not adventurous or creative enough in the way they engage with students in lessons. This means that many students remain passive for long periods, spending too long listening and not enough time contributing to the lesson. At the time of the inspection a new system was being introduced by the school to measure the quality of teaching and learning because it had identified that the previous system was not sufficiently effective at bringing about improvement. The school has gone through a particularly challenging time, and the headteacher and governors have been very effective in steering it through. A more self-critical culture has been established. Managers know where the main priorities for improvement lie; however, the system used for self evaluation needs to be improved because it is not applied consistently or rigorously enough across all areas of the school. This is an improving school as the better examination and test results in 2007 show. It has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Parents are very satisfied with the quality of education and care provided but changes to the school timetable have caused considerable unease amongst some of them. The school is working hard to explain to parents the reasons for these changes, and to communicate the positive effects that are beginning to emerge. The school gives satisfactory value for money. The school's specialist status has had a positive effect, for example it has broadened the range of learning materials available to students.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 2

Achievements and standards in the sixth form are good. Students are challenged by teachers through a variety of stimulating activities. There is particularly good use of the virtual learning environment to enhance students' achievement. Students are actively involved in their own learning and well motivated. Effective target setting is combined with frequent feedback to students on what they need to do to improve. Students praise the constructive relationships they have with staff and the helpful support they have received. The measurement by the school of standards achieved is accurate, and the school has taken effective action to replace under-performing subjects with more appropriate vocational options.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of students by ensuring they receive the right level of challenge in lessons.
- Ensure the system used to observe teaching and learning leads to improvement.
- Make the self-evaluation process more accurate and useful by improving the way in which students, staff and parents are consulted.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Most students enter the school with standards that are around the national average. In both Key Stages 3 and 4, progress is satisfactory overall. However, there are significant variations in the progress made in different subjects and by different groups of students. For example, the progress made by some groups in science is significantly lower than in English. Lower ability girls and students eligible for free school meals tend to make slow progress. The school has recognised this and has introduced a more rigorous system of measuring progress through the use of progress coaches. There is a trend of improvement in the standards achieved in the 2007 national test results and examinations. The achievements of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds are usually in line with the rest of the school and in the case of some groups even better. Students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly the ones with hearing impairment, make good progress.

Standards have risen overall since the last inspection and in some areas are above the national average; however, there is still some unevenness. Standards achieved in Key Stage 3 are around average overall. The proportion of students that gain five or more good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, has remained around the national average for the last three years. The proportion gaining five or more good GCSEs in any subject rose again in 2007, and is above the national average. Girls generally achieve higher standards than boys.

In the sixth form, achievement is good. Students reach high standards and work hard. Most sixth form students reach the challenging targets set by teachers. Many students progress on to higher education.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Almost all students say they enjoy school and this is borne out by their above average level of attendance. Students behave well in lessons and move round the school in a safe and orderly manner. There are few incidents of bullying and in the rare cases where this occurs students say it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Students feel safe in the school because they are well supported by staff. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a multi-cultural school with a harmonious

atmosphere in which students display mutual respect towards one another. Students are confident and express strong opinions on a wide range of issues related to their community and the wider world through well planned citizenship lessons. Many are involved in fund raising activities for local charities. The “Thought for the Day” which appears on the school virtual learning environment allow students in this very large school to consider the same spiritual message. Older students enjoy taking responsibility; for example, they support pupils in local primary schools in the successful sports leadership programme. Students develop a good awareness of how to follow healthy lifestyles and many take advantage of the range of healthy food options at lunchtime, although the school’s arrangements for collection and recycling of waste need to be further developed. Inspectors noticed a lot of litter around the canteen areas at lunchtimes. The sixth form school council is active and has a positive effect on the school; however, in the lower school the council is less effective and has recently been reconstituted. Students develop good functional literacy, numeracy and computing skills which equip them well for adult life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Students behave well in lessons and are keen to learn; most work hard and concentrate for extended periods. No inadequate teaching and learning was observed. In the best lessons there are positive working relationships and students make good progress. Teaching resources and classrooms are of a high quality. The school has worked hard to link assessment to learning, with the result that most students now know the level at which they are working; however, they are not always as clear about what they need to do to improve. In some lessons activities lack variety, teachers spend too much time on explanations and students are too passive. Sometimes the more able students finish tasks quickly and are then held back by the lack of opportunity to work independently.

Some departments are engaged in useful research with higher education institutions on what makes teaching effective and some of this work is translated into practical support and advice for teachers. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants, but sometimes teachers do not adapt materials or approaches to meet the needs of these students. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good because teachers are more adventurous in the range and varieties of activities they use. There is particularly good use of the virtual learning environment. Students are more confident in putting forward their own ideas, using analysis and discovering things for themselves.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school’s curriculum is good. It closely matches the needs of students and meets statutory requirements. In Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form students can combine academic and vocational subjects. This initiative has led to better achievement and improved the behaviour of some students for whom a narrow curriculum was not appropriate. Particular attention has been paid to local skills shortages; for example, the ‘Pathways to construction’ programme which is being

run in association with local builders. Close and effective curriculum partnerships are in place with other schools. In the sixth form this has meant the range of subjects on offer has been extended; for example, further mathematics is offered.

The school's specialist status and adult education programme have enabled it to broaden the curriculum. A good range of optional enrichment and intervention activities, including additional lessons, are offered at the end of the school day. Activities are very popular and often over-subscribed; the school is aware of this and is trying hard to modify the programme to satisfy the demands from students to participate in the most popular activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The school provides a good range of effective support for students, including those with additional needs. Arrangements to ensure health and safety are in place. Procedures to protect students and keep them safe follow the recommended guidelines. Attendance is carefully monitored and effective action is taken to improve the attendance of all students, including the small group for whom persistent absence is a problem. Support effectively promotes good behaviour, with the result that exclusions from lessons and the school are rare.

Good partnerships exist with outside agencies to ensure specialist advice and guidance is available where necessary. The academic tracking and target setting system has been greatly improved and is effective. Departmental heads' use of data has improved and they are now able to measure the progress of groups more accurately. Support given by teachers and progress coaches is beginning to have a positive impact on the achievement of individual students. Students in the sixth form have a range of opportunities to seek advice and guidance on career choices; as a result they are able to make well informed decisions, with many moving on to higher education.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school has been steered through a particularly challenging time by the strong leadership of the headteacher and governors. There is a clear vision for the future that focuses on raising achievement. Targets have been revised and are more challenging for both staff and students. While leaders have a general understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, more accurate analysis is needed. There is insufficient sharing of good practice between departments. The school improvement plan is thorough and covers many areas of performance. It identifies the key priorities for action, but it is not informed by a sufficiently accurate self-evaluation process. The work of middle managers has improved and they are now far more focused on the key priorities for improvement. However, some managers are still not confident about making judgements about the quality of lessons. Governors are very supportive, and satisfactory systems are in place to hold the work of leaders to account.

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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?	3	2
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	3	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### 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	2	

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
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?	2	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>	3	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	3	
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

21 September 2007

Dear Students,

Inspection of Heaton Manor School, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE7 7DP

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you offered us this week. We very much appreciated the opportunity to talk to you about your school. It is important that you know what conclusions we reached.

We found that almost all of you enjoy school. You work hard in lessons and many of you achieve good results. However, in some subjects, you do not progress as well as you should and we are asking the school to give you more challenging work.

Your teachers work hard and we did not observe any inadequate lessons. In the best lessons, activities are varied and interesting and you really get involved in your own learning.

Our view is that you are provided with a broad and interesting curriculum. However, the work of the school council needs to be improved and this will allow you to have a real voice in the work of the school. For example, this could enable you, to pass on your views about the quality of your lessons and support.

The school has a friendly atmosphere, behaviour is good and bullying rare. The school offers very high quality facilities, but the litter left around at lunchtime gives a poor impression to visitors.

The sixth form is a real strength of the school.

The school is well led by the headteacher, and he and senior staff are trying hard to improve it even further. The first step will be to improve the way strengths and weaknesses are identified and you will be able to help by getting involved in this process.

The inspection team's judgements on Heaton Manor could be summarised as follows:

- Achievements and standards are satisfactory but could improve even further.
- Most students behave very well, but could be stretched more in some lessons.
- The curriculum is broad, and teachers work hard.
- Support is good, and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- The leaders of the school are very committed and determined to deliver further improvement.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Johnson

HMI