

# Beckfoot School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107386
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	324567
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Katrina Gueli 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 (total)	1593
Sixth form	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Winkley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Horn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Wagon Lane Bingley West Yorkshire BD16 1EE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 771444
<b>Fax number</b>	01274 771445

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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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

Beckfoot is a large 11- 18 secondary school with a designated resource provision for 17 students with physical disabilities. The school became a Technology College in 2000 and was re-designated for a further four years in 2004 when a second specialism of Performing Arts was also awarded. The school became a training school in 2004. The school serves an area with average levels of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups is above average, with students with a Pakistani heritage as the largest minority ethnic group. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The school has gained a number of awards including silver Eco school status, Artsmark Gold, Sportsmark, the Healthy School award and a Charter Mark for inclusion.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Beckfoot School is a good school with a number of significant outstanding features. The high quality pastoral care and support that students receive and the outstanding curriculum are key factors in securing students' outstanding personal development and well-being. Students and their parents have a very positive view of the school. Many students commented on the enthusiasm and commitment of all the staff to ensuring they reach the best possible outcomes both academically and personally.

Leaders, managers and governors have made significant improvements since the time of the last inspection. Good leadership has, for example, resulted in rising standards, innovative curriculum developments and higher attendance, demonstrating the school's good capacity to improve further.

Standards are above average overall and achievement is good. Teaching and learning are also good. A great emphasis has been placed on developing teaching to ensure that students are engaged and enjoy their learning and the impact of this work was evident in the vast majority of lessons seen during the inspection. All students have targets and the tracking of their progress is robust. Some good examples of teachers' marking were seen, but it does not always make clear for students what they need to do to improve further. Care, guidance and support are good overall and the pastoral support, particularly for the most vulnerable students, is outstanding and this contributes to the very inclusive ethos of the school.

Student leadership is very well embedded and the contribution of the student voice to informing the future development of the school is excellent. The school is an integral part of the local community and links with external partners extend the impact of its work both nationally and internationally. Specialist status has been used effectively to enhance the teaching of technology, science and the performing arts in primary partner schools. Members of the local community have benefited from well planned courses in information technology and digital photography. The school is making a good contribution to community cohesion work with a diverse range of partners, strong parental links, the outstanding curriculum and specialist college activities.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good overall, with some outstanding features. Standards are above average and achievement is good or better in the majority of subjects. Provisional results in 2008 show a slight improvement on standards and achievement compared with 2007. Leaders have been proactive in tackling areas of underperformance. The school's internal tracking data indicates that the small number of subject areas identified as a concern is now on course to improve.

The leadership and management of the sixth form are good and senior leaders work effectively with heads of faculty and form tutors have developed a clear vision for future developments. Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They enjoy being part of a very supportive environment with excellent relationships and appreciate the help they receive from teachers. All students benefit from participating in the wide range of leadership opportunities provided, including helping younger students with their reading. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Students achieve well because teachers explain topics carefully and involve them in discussions. However, a few lessons do not yet provide them with

sufficient opportunities for developing responsibility for their own learning. The curriculum is good. Through collaborative arrangements with other schools, students can choose from a broad range of level three courses with some level two provision in business, and health and social care. Students benefit from the very good range of enrichment activities, especially in sport and the arts which makes a very good contribution to their personal development and well-being.

There is outstanding care, guidance and support for students because all staff know individual students and their parents really well. All students receive excellent guidance, with those making university applications, for example, benefiting from very extensive links with higher education.

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

- To improve the quality of teachers' marking to ensure all learners are well informed about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress throughout the school and by the end of Key Stage 4 reach standards that are generally above average. Provisional results for 2008, standards observed during the inspection, and school tracking and assessment data indicate that standards have been maintained or improved and that achievement is good. The achievement of boys has improved and this is now in line with that of girls. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups make good progress, because support is targeted effectively to meet their individual learning needs. All attainment targets in the technology specialism lead subjects were met at Key Stage 4 in 2008, but some of those in the arts subjects were not. At Key Stage 3, there has been an improving trend in standards in all core subjects for the last three years, particularly with the number of students who reach the higher levels of attainment. The number of students gaining 5 or more A and A\* to G grades at GCSE has also shown a strong trend of improvement. These rising standards are due in part to the curriculum developments at both key stages and the good support for students who are identified as being at risk of underachievement.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Students value their time at school and this is evident in their high levels of enjoyment and through their good attendance. Students have a very good understanding of how to ensure their personal safety. Incidents of bullying are rare and if bullying happens it is dealt with very effectively by the school. Behaviour is good overall, but a small minority of students still do not meet the school's very high expectations in this area. Students know how to keep themselves healthy and have at least two hours of physical education lessons during the week. Their commitment to healthy lifestyles is seen in the high participation in the extra-curricular sporting activities available during both the timetabled sports and performing arts (SPA) time and after school. Students value the variety of meals provided by the school and gain awards for making healthy choices. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. Their moral and social development are outstanding and this is evident in students' consideration of more vulnerable peers and their charity work, raising funds for a variety of causes including Tradecraft and Children in Need. Students are proud of their school and their involvement in

student leadership is an exemplary feature of the school. The student leadership group is very active in organising a range of other student led groups, giving good direction and having a clear understanding of school development issues. Students have played an active part in the design of the new plans for the school building and are designing a web-site for student use. Students develop into confident individuals and are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan lessons which include a variety of activities supported by good quality resources. As a result, the vast majority of students show positive attitudes to their learning and are well motivated, keen to ask questions to develop their understanding, enjoy their lessons and subsequently, progress in most lessons is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to support students' understanding, providing clear explanations and demonstrating skills and techniques effectively. In the best lessons, assessment criteria are shared with the students and are well used to show them how to make progress. However, a small minority of teachers do not match activities sufficiently closely to the needs of all students and some lessons are too teacher directed. Consequently, for some students there is sometimes a lack of challenge, while others struggle with the learning activities they have been given. The school has made good progress in developing its technology and arts specialisms. The work of the lead subjects, alongside the research and development group, has involved all departments in improving the quality of teaching and learning by sharing good practice, for example, in developing assessment and revision techniques.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Substantial changes have ensured that the curriculum meets the need of all learners exceptionally well. This has had a very positive effect on raising standards, improving attendance and increasing levels of student engagement. The nurture group and weekly literacy hour that have been introduced in Year 7, are good examples of how the school has changed the curriculum to meet individual students' needs more effectively. At Key Stages 3 and 4, flexibility has increased and personal pathways for students are well developed. A good example of this is the early entry of students for a GCSE modern foreign language qualification. The specialist subjects have made a good contribution to curricular breadth at each key stage and all students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, benefit from the excellent partnership work with other organisations. The wide ranging enrichment programme, including the new SPA time initiative, contributes to students' enjoyment of school and has a positive impact on their personal development and well-being. Students praised the introduction of 'sweeper' buses which have improved access to after-school activities and as a result take up has increased. Specialist provision including sports for those students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures equality of access is available to all. The curriculum also provides a rich variety of opportunities for students to take on responsibilities in the community. These activities and increased student use of information and communication technologies contribute well to the development of the skills and qualities that they will need to ensure their future economic well-being. Themed days, Awesome Curriculum Experience (ACE) events and assemblies

give students time to consider current issues and effectively develop their spiritual, moral and cultural understanding.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall. The pastoral care and support that students receive is outstanding. This is due to the high level of commitment and expertise of the staff and carefully tailored support packages, which ensure that all students can achieve their potential. In addition, the system of different coloured sweatshirts in each key stage, suggested by the students, enables older pupils to make a positive contribution to the care and support for younger pupils. The school's work to improve attendance has been very effective. Over three years, attendance has risen from below to above average and the number of students with high levels of absence has been significantly reduced. Procedures for the care and support of vulnerable students, including external partnerships, are outstanding. All review documentation is up to date and of high quality. Systems to safeguard health and safety are also robust and regularly reviewed, with students involved in developing the local authority safeguarding statement of intent.

Students are well informed about what to expect in the next stage of their education, through excellent channels of communication, including the use of blogging about their experiences with partner primary schools. Careers guidance is well-integrated into the curriculum and review systems. Target setting and systems to track students' progress are well embedded and students at risk of underachievement are, therefore, identified quickly. A wide range of very effective strategies, including mentoring, are used to help individuals get back on track.

The extent to which students are informed about their academic progress is less well developed. Not all students are fully aware of their targets, their current attainment or what to do to ensure they meet or exceed their personal targets. There are some examples of good practice in teachers' marking of students' work, but overall the quality of marking is too variable. While written comments are very positive in tone, they do not always provide sufficient detail about what students should do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders have an outstanding vision for Beckfoot School, which is being realised through effective distributed leadership and a school-wide commitment to ensuring the best possible outcomes for all learners. Innovation and creativity are encouraged and this is having a significant impact, improving teaching and curriculum breadth. Processes for checking how well the school is doing are rigorous and well-embedded, ensuring areas for development are quickly identified. Improvement strategies are well chosen and examples of the impact of work to address underperformance can be seen in rising standards at Key Stage 3, increasing numbers of students gaining 5 A\* and A grades at GCSE and improved attendance. These aspects support the school's good capacity to improve further. However, the school rightly identifies that some underperformance remains in a minority of subject areas. Targets set are challenging and accountability for students' progress is well supported by line manager links and performance management procedures. The school is a true learning community, where the training and development of both teachers and support staff is a priority. A significant number of support

staff have key leadership roles and these colleagues are making effective contributions to school improvement. Governors are very committed to helping the school to improve and are well informed about its strengths and areas for development. They act as good critical friends, utilising their areas of expertise effectively. Recently introduced structures to increase the rigour with which they monitor the school's performance have the potential to increase their effectiveness further. The specialist programme is well led and managed with senior and middle leaders working closely with governors to evaluate progress and develop a vision for future developments. Parents have an overwhelmingly positive view of the school and it has a very good reputation within the local community. Work both within the school and with external partners is making a good contribution to promoting community cohesion.



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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	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</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	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?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<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.

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
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	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
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 learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	1

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
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	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2	
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	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember that I visited your school recently with a team of inspectors. On behalf of the team, I would like to thank you for sharing your thoughts about the school and showing us your work.

We found that your school is good with a number of outstanding features. The curriculum is outstanding in its breadth and in the very wide ranging enrichment activities it provides both within and beyond the school day. This curriculum, combined with good teaching, is contributing to your high levels of enjoyment and helping you to make good academic progress. The pastoral care and support that you receive is of high quality and is making a very good contribution to your personal development and well-being, which is outstanding. You demonstrate, for example, very impressive skills and qualities gained through taking on responsibility for shaping how the school will be in the future. Leaders, managers and all the staff are highly committed to ensuring the best possible outcomes for you and they have a clear vision for improving the school further. They are setting challenging targets for you to achieve and check regularly to see how well you are progressing. You are helped to get back on track quickly if you are underachieving and are well guided about the next stage of your education.

Some of you, however, are not clear what your targets are and teachers' marking is not always helpful in telling you what you need to do to improve. We have asked the school to make this aspect of its work better to ensure you are all well informed about the next steps in your learning.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you the very best for the future as you help the school to realise its vision.