

# Morley High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108078
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	324701
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jan Bennett 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)	1533
Sixth form	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr T Elliot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J Townsley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Fountain Street Morley Leeds West Yorkshire LS27 0PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 253 2952
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 253 1483

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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

Morley High is a larger than average mixed comprehensive school to the south of Leeds. The school is growing as more parents from the immediate area make Morley High their first choice. Fewer students than average are eligible for free school meals. Most students are White British and a very small proportion speak English as an additional language. Few students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is half the national average. The school has had specialist technology status since September 2003. The school has the Stephen Lawrence Award and the Inclusion Chartermark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Morley High is an outstanding school that has improved dramatically since the last inspection. The headteacher has spearheaded the transformation by providing strong and inspirational leadership and has been very ably supported by the senior leadership team and governors. The middle management team, which was new at the time of the last inspection, has developed extremely well and taken on a major role in driving the school forward. Students have also worked very hard and effectively to improve achievement. Communication with parents is extremely good and the vast majority of parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school.

Training opportunities for staff are exemplary and underpin very effective capacity building and succession planning. The school has a very good track record of developing and promoting staff. All staff are encouraged to develop new skills, from caretakers learning plumbing skills to managers on leadership courses. Teamwork is another key strength of the school. Academic and support staff work as a unified team in the drive for continual improvement. Heads of departments work very closely with pastoral leaders to tackle issues quickly and teachers from very diverse curriculum areas share ideas and good practice. Highly effective target setting and monitoring has been a further major factor in the remarkable improvement since the last inspection. Very challenging targets are set for managers, teachers and students and they are monitored closely and reviewed regularly.

The personal development of students is outstanding, reflecting the high quality teaching, support, care and guidance. Students make an excellent contribution to the community through fundraising and many other projects. Improving behaviour has been a priority for the school, and behaviour, both in and out of lessons, is now outstanding. Students' behaviour during the evacuation of school, following a fire alarm on the first day of inspection, was impeccable.

Achievement and standards have improved year on year. In 2008, 80% of Year 11 students achieved at least five high grade passes at GCSE, which was significantly higher than the national average and represented a 16% increase on the previous year. Students of all levels of ability and backgrounds are encouraged and supported to achieve their best. Action is taken quickly if any specific group of students underachieves. For example, swift and effective action was taken when boys did not perform as well as girls in English. Sixth formers achieve well but too few obtain the highest grades in AS- and A-level examinations.

There has been a relentless and successful drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning which is now outstanding in the main school. Best practice, developed in the specialist areas, is shared well. The curriculum, outstanding at the last inspection, has been strengthened further especially in Key Stage 3. Specialist areas are working particularly well together to integrate the curriculum.

Resources are very effectively deployed and financial management is robust. The school offers excellent value for money and has outstanding capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The sixth form provides students with a good education and they make good progress relative to their starting points, although there is some variation between subjects. The broad curriculum includes vocational and academic courses, mainly at advanced level, but the range of lower-level courses is growing. The school works hard, and successfully, to match students' needs and

capabilities to suitable courses. Students achieve well on vocational courses but standards are not always as high on AS- and A-level courses. Teaching is good overall. There are examples of outstanding practice, but in too many lessons opportunities are missed to develop the independent learning skills that students need to achieve the highest grades. In these lessons students are passive recipients rather than active participants in their own learning. Students' outstanding personal development enables them to play a mature role in the school and wider communities. Their contributions include mentoring younger students and taking the lead in supporting community groups and charities. Students enjoy their sixth form experience and retention rates are high. Very thorough systems are in place to monitor and track students' progress. Students respect their teachers and appreciate the time they give to supporting them and advising them on possible future pathways. Leadership of the sixth form is good and there is good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Develop sixth form students' independent learning skills so that they are better equipped to attain the highest grades.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards and achievement have improved markedly over the last three years. Students enter the school with average levels of attainment but highly effective transition arrangements ensure that they get off to a good start so that by the end of Key Stage 3 they attain above average standards. In 2008 standards at the end of Key Stage 4 were significantly higher than average. The proportion of students gaining five or more high grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, increased considerably and was significantly higher than the national average. The school's data show that students, in both Key Stages, are making outstanding progress. No specific group of students underachieves. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number of students in public care achieve in line with their peers because of outstanding support provided by the school.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The spiritual, moral social and cultural development of students is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning, enjoy school and value the commitment and support of staff. They also recognise the significant improvements in the school that have been made in recent years. Their behaviour is outstanding. Students' attendance is in line with the national average. Students say that they feel very safe in school and are well aware of the dangers from substance abuse and the Internet. They are making very healthy choices with regard to eating and to physical activity. They appreciate the school's excellent canteen and wide range of sporting activities. Through the school's specialist status and the work of sixth formers, students are involved in a full range of activities with the community that are broadening their horizons. They work with the elderly, the visually impaired and local schools and have strengthening links with Zambia, Poland and Italy. The links with the local and wider communities also promote readiness for work and life after school very effectively. The school council enables students to make their voices heard and members of the council are very effective in introducing change. Students have an excellent grasp of basic skills and apply these well to charity work as well as to community links. These contribute well to outstanding economic awareness.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers demonstrate very secure subject knowledge and the vast majority of lessons, especially in the main school, progress at a lively pace that engages the interest of students and promotes outstanding learning. A broad range of teaching and learning styles contributes to the excellent progress made by students. Lesson plans are clear and concise and tasks are tailored to meet the needs of individuals, encouraging all students to reach their full potential. In the main school especially, students are provided with many opportunities to think for themselves and share ideas through class discussion, peer mentorship and self-assessment. The quality of assessment is excellent and constructive comments encourage further improvement. Teachers use excellent questioning techniques which probe students' understanding and extend their thinking. Excellent practice, developed in the specialist subjects, is shared throughout the school and is raising the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. In the best lessons the pace is lively and well-planned activities encourage independent learning, but this is not happening in all lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum meets the needs, interests and aspirations of all students exceptionally well. The emphasis is firmly on success for all. Very effective links with partner primary schools ensure a smooth transition. Specialist Year 7 teaching arrangements place an exciting emphasis on successful learning techniques and enhance important literacy and numeracy skills. By the age of 14, students have an outstanding choice of GCSE, vocational and work related courses. Central to these experiences is the application of information and communication technology in developing valuable communication and research skills. There is a strong emphasis on key employability skills across all subjects, including decision making, problem solving and effective teamwork. A comprehensive programme of citizenship and personal, social and health education makes an excellent contribution to students' personal development. Students value and enjoy the extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities offered, including sporting, music and theatrical activities, which enrich their everyday learning experiences. A highly personalised careers guidance programme, and full participation in work experience, ensures that students are well prepared to enter the next stage of their education or working life. The impact of the technology specialism is keenly felt throughout the school, in supporting what is currently on offer, and in leading new and innovative opportunities.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

High levels of staff commitment to outstanding pastoral care and robust academic guidance secure the achievement of all students, including those who are vulnerable and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students with additional needs are supported by alternative curriculum 'pathways' that provide them with a safe supportive learning environment. Provision for these students is securely underpinned by extensive links to outside support agencies. Parents are delighted with the care their children receive. Transition arrangements from primary school are exemplary and great care is taken to prepare students for transfer to the next year group. Clear and established procedures to promote child protection and

safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Health and safety arrangements, including risk assessments, are secure. The management of attendance is exemplary and has improved attendance so that it is now in line with the national average. However, through no fault of the school, it has not improved as fast as the school would have liked. Procedures to monitor and track students' progress towards their targets are in place and are excellent. They have contributed significantly to rising standards. Students understand how well they are achieving and know what to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has a very clear sense of purpose and has steered the school through a period of very rapid improvement since the last inspection. He is well supported by the senior leadership team who sustained the improvement throughout the last academic year when both the headteacher and a deputy were seconded for three days per week to support a local school in difficulty. Middle managers have gained considerable experience since the last inspection and have benefited from a wide range of professional development. They form a very energetic and capable team that is constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of provision. Strategic planning and quality improvement are very effective. A four-year plan for the school, developed in 2006, sets out a very challenging agenda for improvement. It is very well understood by staff and is underpinned by ambitious targets for managers, teachers and students. The very rigorous monitoring and review of these targets has been fundamental to the dramatic improvement in achievement and standards since the last inspection. Performance management is very robust and is linked very closely to staff training which is exemplary. Morley High is one of the few schools nationally to have the accolade of Investors in People Champion. Governance is outstanding. Governors know the school very well and are closely involved in strategic planning and self-evaluation. They challenge and support senior managers exceptionally well. They also evaluate their own performance and refine the way that they work to operate even more effectively. The school has a very good understanding of its local community and has strong local, regional, national and international links. The approach to community cohesion is good but is not always planned and reviewed systematically. Promotion of equality is outstanding and underpins all aspects of the school's work.





## 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	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	1	2

## Achievement and standards

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

<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	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	1	

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1	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?	1	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
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	

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

Inspection of Morley High School, Leeds, LS27 0PD

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of the school. We enjoyed meeting you, seeing you at work and hearing your views. Morley High is an outstanding school of which you can be extremely proud.

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

- Achievement is outstanding and standards are exceptionally high in the main school. GCSE results are getting better every year and are well above the national average. Achievement in the sixth form is good, standards are generally in line with average, and pass rates on vocational courses are impressive.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and move at a lively pace. Your teachers are very good at asking questions to check your understanding and make you think. We were very pleased to see that you are taking responsibility for your own learning through peer assessment and self-assessment. Sixth formers are not always encouraged to think for themselves, however, so we have asked the school to do more to develop the independent learning skills necessary to achieve the highest AS- and A-level grades.
- The curriculum is outstanding. We were very impressed with the new curriculum in Year 7, the very wide choice of courses in Key Stage 4, the PSHE curriculum and the excellent range of extra-curricular activities available. We were also pleased to see that you are developing your ICT skills and other skills that prepare you well for employment.
- Your behaviour in and out of lessons is outstanding. We were especially impressed by the excellent way that you behaved when the fire alarm went off during inspection. You report that you feel very safe in school, you know about the dangers of substance abuse and the Internet and you are very well informed about healthy lifestyles. It is very pleasing to see that you are contributing well to your local community and are learning about other faiths and religions.
- The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. There is excellent support available for vulnerable students and those needing additional personal support. Target setting and monitoring systems are very robust and you know how well you are progressing and what you need to do to improve.
- You have an outstanding headteacher who receives excellent support from the governors and other managers. The school has improved tremendously in the last few years and there are plans for further improvement. We hope that you will play your part in making Morley High School even better.

We would like to congratulate you on being part of such an outstanding school and wish you well for the future.