

Beverley High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118072
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	326757
Inspection date	20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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	Girls
Number on roll	
School (total)	850
Sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Dunning
Headteacher	Mrs Ruth Vincent
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2005
School address	Norwood Beverley East Riding of Yorkshire HU17 9EX
Telephone number	01482 881658
Fax number	01482 870935

Age group	11–18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- how the school is developing strategies to accelerate progress and promote achievement for higher ability students
- the personal development and well-being of the students
- the quality of the curriculum.

Evidence was collected from: observations of lessons; scrutiny of performance data, assessment information, school documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, and parents' questionnaire returns; discussions with students, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report. On some points, there was sufficient inspection evidence to suggest that the school had been over cautious in its evaluation. Grades included in this report on areas that were not inspected in detail have been agreed with the school.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average comprehensive school for girls situated in the town of Beverley which is above average in terms of social and economic advantage. Most students are of White British heritage. There are fewer students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than average and only a small proportion of students whose first language is not English, although this has increased in recent years. A smaller than average proportion of students claim a free school meal.

The school has been a specialist technology college since 1998 and is a Leading Edge Partnership lead school. It has a joint coeducational sixth form with Beverley Grammar School. It also has close links and some shared provision with another high school and two local colleges.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Beverley High School is an outstanding and extremely effective school. Almost all areas of practice are good and many are outstanding. It is highly regarded by parents and students and deservedly enjoys a good reputation in the local community. A typical parental comment sums up the views of many: 'The curriculum is delivered with enthusiasm and this rubs off on our child'. Standards are high and achievement is good. The excellent curriculum, the outstanding care, guidance and support provided to students and the excellent relationships found throughout the school result in the outstanding personal development and well-being of all students.

Students' attitudes to learning and almost all aspects of their personal development are exemplary and make a very significant contribution to their successful achievement. Students enjoy attending Beverley High School, as shown by their above average attendance, good behaviour and enthusiastic commitment to all that is on offer. Students feel valued, cared for, safe, and have high levels of self-esteem. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion. This gives students a strong concern for social justice and a well developed ability to exercise responsibility well, both personally and on behalf of others. They are currently working towards the Eco Schools Award and work with the Beverley Fair Trade group towards Fair Trade School status. Students eagerly respond to the excellent advice they receive on healthy living and eating and are proud of the school's status as a national healthy school. They engage in a wide range of activities beyond the classroom such as clubs, trips, locally, nationally and internationally developing confidence and assurance. Students contribute very effectively to their local community through initiatives such as the town trail, the town art project, and participation in Local Authority surveys. Music is a strength of the school and students are frequently involved in concerts and recitals for the benefit of the local community. All students in Year 10 have the opportunity to participate in enterprise activities which are promoted across the curriculum and especially in art, mathematics and technology. Students are consulted on all matters relating to their life in school. Recently they have participated in curriculum development and formed part of the interviewing panels for senior posts in school. Their outstanding personal development and high academic standards prepare them very well for future economic well-being.

Standards are high at both Key Stages and are consistently above average. Given the students' starting points, which are just above the national average, the standards gained by the students, represents good achievement. The school analyses trends in performance very effectively and analysis of the 2008 results at the end of Key Stage 4 showed that some higher ability students in Year 11 did not achieve as well as they might have done. Several strategies are in place to address this and detailed tracking shows that the pace of learning and achievement is accelerating in Key Stage 4. A minority of parents expressed concern that their daughters were making slower progress in Key Stage 3, but national data, as well as the school's own tracking systems shows that most students make good progress and, for some, progress is outstanding. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, as do those new to learning English, because of the excellent care and additional support they receive from teachers and expert teaching assistants.

Teaching is good overall, with some that is outstanding. A whole-school focus is to promote creative teaching strategies which enhance enjoyment for all students. In the best lessons,

teachers use their very good subject knowledge and detailed lesson planning to exploit students' natural curiosity and drive the pace of learning. In most lessons, students progress well because teaching is challenging, activities are varied and materials carefully prepared to match students' needs and interests. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used expertly to the benefit of all students. On the few occasions when learning is less good, the most able are not challenged enough to do as well as they might. Students' work is marked well and advice offered on how they can improve. There are numerous opportunities across the curriculum for students to assess their own and others' learning. The care and support given to students are excellent. The school ensures that students feel safe and are comfortable about seeking help, confident that any problems will be quickly solved by caring and committed staff. Students' progress is rigorously tracked by 'Progress Leaders' and effective interventions made when any are found to be falling behind in any aspect. Targeted groups receive extra support. For example, the Kingswood residential is a strategy to help students in Year 7 to make the best of school opportunities and the school is also involved in a national project called 'Narrowing the Gap' which aims to address possible underperformance in Key Stage 4. Child protection arrangements and safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements and are fully understood by all staff. The school's health and safety and risk assessment systems meet requirements and are frequently monitored.

An outstanding curriculum underpins students' good achievement. Transition arrangements to ensure new students settle quickly and happily are exemplary and praised by many parents. The formal curriculum and additional enrichment activities provide a rich and rewarding experience for students throughout the school. Alongside the wide range of academic courses, there is a broad range of vocational, applied GCSE and diploma courses to suit the needs of all students. The school's collaboration with other providers is outstanding and works to the benefit not only of students attending Beverley High School but also the benefit of many other young people in this area. Students are given excellent advice and guidance on choice of courses. Specialist status has had a very positive impact on all aspects of the life of the school and achievement in ICT is outstanding. Nearly every student in school achieves at least grade B at GCSE in ICT. Extensive opportunities for support and learning outside the school day are provided, with 'twilight' GCSE courses in foreign languages and sciences. A vast range of extra-curricular opportunities exists for all students and take-up is high and positive. Recent overseas trips have included Italy, Sicily, Northern France, Berlin and there is a regular school exchange with Japan. The 'creative curriculum' group seeks to enhance interest and learning through a wide range of curricular links such as, for example, the current joint project on evolution involving the science and art departments.

Leadership, management and governance of the school are excellent. The headteacher and senior leadership team are totally committed to ensuring the very best for students in every respect and give clear direction to the school community. A drive for continual improvement, efficient management systems and highly effective pastoral and academic leadership help ensure success. Self-evaluation is comprehensive and thorough resulting in a detailed and accurate knowledge of the school which gives it an outstanding capacity to improve in future. Well targeted action promotes good improvement with rigorous evaluation of the impact of developments. Issues identified for improvement at the last inspection have been dealt with so effectively that these areas are now examples of exemplary practice. The school has fully evaluated its contribution to community cohesion and planned future provision. The school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion both in the locality and further afield. It has international links with America, Japan and Sri Lanka. In recognition of this work

the school has gained both the International School Award and Global Schools Award links across the United Kingdom. Despite high standards there is no hint of complacency. Staff are respected and valued but challenged to give of their best on behalf of students. Governors understand their role well and challenge the school appropriately. Views of stakeholders are valued, sought and acted upon. Very good relationships with an extensive range of external agencies and with parents are used to support students very well. The school works closely with other schools to share and develop good practice. Resources are well managed to maximum benefit.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The joint co-educational sixth form with Beverley Grammar School was inspected in September 2008 and judged to be outstanding. Evidence from this inspection shows that this is still the case. Standards are well above average and students achieve very well. Teaching and learning are good. The personal development and well-being of students is outstanding, as is the care, guidance and support that students receive and the leadership and management of the sixth form.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching consistently challenges the higher ability students.

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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?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	1
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	

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	2	
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	1	

The quality of provision

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

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 eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 March 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Beverley High School, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17 9EX

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school last week. I enjoyed talking to you and was impressed by your sense of responsibility and confidence. You told me that you enjoy school and are proud of your school and its many achievements.

Yours is an outstanding school. Teaching and learning are good and your teachers are experts in their field. Your very positive attitudes to learning, good behaviour and excellent relationships in school all contribute to the high standards reached and good achievement of most students. The curriculum is excellent, giving you a wealth of choices and many opportunities to learn through out of school activities and visits locally and abroad. All the staff take excellent care of you and track your progress to try to make sure you achieve as well as you can. You told me that you feel safe, take advantage of good teaching on healthy lifestyles and are consulted about a wide range of matters affecting you in school.

Leaders and managers are forward thinking and committed to ensuring that your education is as good as it can be. I have asked the school to look at one area in particular to improve, and that is to ensure that teaching is sufficiently challenging so that all of you, including the highest ability students, achieve their full potential.

I wish you all every success in the future at Beverley High School.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw

Lead inspector