

Heysham High School Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119711
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327115
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Sharples 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
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1095
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Needham
Headteacher	Mr Maurice Graham
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
School address	Limes Avenue Morecambe Lancashire LA3 1HS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 31 lessons and held discussions with the Chair of Governors, senior leaders, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation for management, planning, safeguarding of students, teaching and the curriculum. A sample of students' work was also scrutinised. Inspectors considered the 168 questionnaires returned by parents along with 167 questionnaires from students and 52 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether teaching is sufficiently challenging and impacting on standards and progress of potential higher achievers and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how well the overall quality of teaching across a range of subjects (particularly in English and mathematics and specialism) is impacting on learners' achievement
- how well students from minority ethnic groups (particularly Polish students) are integrated into the life of the school and supported in their learning
- how well assessment is used by teachers to support learning across the school.

Information about the school

Heysham High School Sports College is a larger than average comprehensive. The overwhelming majority of students are from White British backgrounds although small numbers are from other White European backgrounds. The proportion of students whose first language is not English is lower than the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average, as is the number of students eligible for free school meals. The school is a specialist sports college and holds a number of awards including Sportsmark, Artsmark Gold, Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Full International School, Partnership Mark, and Football Charter Standard.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This school has made good progress since the previous inspection and displays many good and some outstanding features. However, because performance in English and mathematics has remained significantly below national averages for three years the school's overall attainment is low. Consequently, the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Upon entering the school visitors are struck by the welcoming and caring ethos. Students referred to the calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere which exists around the school. Inspectors agreed with this sentiment. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for students is outstanding. Teaching and learning in the large majority of lessons are good and satisfactory in a few. The school has developed a rich and varied curriculum which offers plenty of choice to students and ensures that their individual needs are met. All of this contributes to improved outcomes for students.

Almost all students make good progress during their time at school. A large part of this improvement is due to the improved quality of teaching and learning and the students' attitude to learning. Standards attained in national examinations have risen markedly in several areas since the previous inspection. Most striking is the increase in the proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE which has risen to 75% this year. Performance in English and mathematics, and the proportion of five A* to C grades including these subjects, have also shown a steady increase since the previous inspection. However, the standards in these three areas have not yet risen above national averages. During their time in the sixth form students are making satisfactory progress but standards overall are below the national average by the end of Year 13. The school acknowledges that this is a continued area for improvement and has good quality action plans in place to ensure that the rates of progress continue at a faster pace.

There are well established systems in place for regularly monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work. The senior leadership team, governors and middle leaders are all fully involved in self-evaluation and know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. The inspection team agreed with the large majority of self-evaluation judgements made by the school. The senior leadership team is united in the vision and aspirations for the school and is relentless in its drive for improvement. The school's leaders set challenging targets for students' performance which in the case of five A* to C grades at GCSE has been surpassed for the last two years. The school has established strong links with its parents, carers and other external partners. They, along with students, are used as a valuable source of information when monitoring the school's progress. Parents and carers, through correspondence and questionnaires, say they are very positive about the changes and progress which have taken place since the previous

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inspection. All of the aforementioned improvements and the strengths in its leadership show that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in English, mathematics and the sixth form by:
 - ensuring that the examples of good and outstanding practice in teaching and learning are disseminated across the school
 - ensuring that assessment is used consistently and regularly by teachers to plan and match learning activities to student need
 - ensuring that teacher tracking and intervention strategies occur quickly enough to impact on students' learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Observations of students during lessons showed that in the majority of cases rates of progress are good. The inspection focussed particularly on students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the most able students. In both cases these groups of students make good progress. Boys make progress and attain results which are not too far from that of girls. This good progress is linked largely to the time teachers spend monitoring students' progress, ensuring that learning is enjoyable. The pastoral support and care for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is excellent and has resulted in them making good and sometimes excellent progress in their learning. Raising standards of attainment in English and mathematics has been a priority for the school since the previous inspection. During this time the school has used a variety of tracking and intervention strategies with students in an attempt to raise standards. However, these strategies have not always been implemented quickly enough in order to have a marked impact on standards. The impact has been most noticeable in mathematics where the proportion of A* to C passes at GCSE has risen from 26% to 44% since 2007. In English the same statistic did not move in 2009, remaining at 41%. The proportion of five A* to C passes at GCSE including English and mathematics has risen from 22% in 2007 to 32% in 2009.

Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance, punctuality and high participation rates in extra-curricular and enrichment activities, especially in sports and the performing arts. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school and student exclusions have reduced dramatically over the last two years. Many students participate in the wide range of sporting activities offered and have an excellent understanding of how these activities improve their health. The school's sports college status and a well developed personal, social and health education curriculum all contribute greatly to the students' excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles.

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Students make an excellent contribution to both the school and the wider community. This is seen, for example, through the 200 or more students who take on the sports leader role. In this capacity students provide coaching and support sporting activities in school, with local schools, and in the national and even international arena. Recently the school linked with a school in Berlin using sport to show how links could be developed between a high school and its partner primaries. The vast majority of students and parents say that the students feel safe and are safe in and around school. Students' understanding of safety issues is outstanding. Incidents of bullying or intimidation are rare and almost always dealt with effectively. Students' spiritual, cultural, social and moral development is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school has worked hard to maintain the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. In the majority of lessons teaching and learning are good. There are several good factors evident in lessons across a range of subjects. Relationships among students and between students and teachers are good and promote an

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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atmosphere which is conducive to effective learning. Behaviour management is good and teachers use a good range of teaching and learning styles which retain students' interest and keeps them engaged in the lesson. Students know their targets and in most subjects are given constructive feedback on how to improve their performance.

Teachers use a colour coded system to record students' progress against targets.

Parents are informed every half term about their child's progress. There are some good examples across the school where teachers use weekly assessment data to plan work to match students' needs and abilities. However, this use of assessment to support learning is not consistently good. Lessons linked to the sports specialism are of a good quality and the faculty is providing a good role model for other curriculum areas to follow. For example, in one physical education lesson there was some outstanding practice in peer assessment.

The school has developed its curriculum extremely well to ensure that students are engaged in learning and that it provides them with a personalised programme aimed at individual need. At Key Stage 4 students are offered a broad range of GCSE and BTEC courses. In addition there is a two year alternative provision option for about 20 Year 11 students. This includes Level 2 courses, vocational placements and links to a local college. The school is taking a leading role in the introduction and development of several diploma courses including sport and active leisure and engineering. As part of the strategy to improve attainment in English and mathematics the school has reduced class sizes in these subjects at Key Stage 4 and appointed two teaching assistants to each department.

The school commits a great deal of energy to students' care, guidance and support. Students say they feel safe and know they have a choice of adults to whom they can turn for help. Part of the inspection focussed on the support for vulnerable students and those entering the country from other European communities. Discussions with a group of Polish students showed that they feel cared for and are included well in the life of the school and local community. The school has excellent arrangements in place for students moving in and out of school at key transition points. There is a very good supply of information and individual guidance for students choosing Key Stage 4 options and for those progressing post-16. At the time of the inspection, the school met all safeguarding requirements. The overall standards of provision across the school impact greatly on the students' attendance, standards of behaviour and the extent to which they enjoy their time in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The school is led and managed well. In the two years at the school, the headteacher has made a great impact on staff, parents and students. The headteacher, staff and governors have a shared vision for the continual improvement in standards and teaching and learning. Systems and procedures for monitoring and evaluating whole-school performance and progress are well established, very effective and are embedded into the work of all leaders and managers. There is a well-established and effective subject review process which monitors all subjects annually and informs the whole school self-evaluation. This involves good working between senior leaders and subject leaders. Findings from the school's self-evaluation are used effectively to inform whole-school and departmental improvement plans which identify well the priorities for moving the school forward. The governing body is very effective as a critical friend and offers rigorous challenge to the school as required. It is supportive of the school and ensures that it offers good value for money. The leadership of the school works hard to ensure that all students are treated equally and that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. Inclusion is a strength of the school and runs through all its work. Similarly, there are good strategies in place for developing the school as a focal point in the local community. Students have many opportunities to gain a sense of belonging to the local community but also to give to the local and wider communities. The sports college specialist status has been strong in promoting aspects of community cohesion at local, national and international levels. There are good safeguarding procedures in place.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Sixth form

Students enter the sixth form with below average levels of attainment. Attainment overall is below average at the end of Year 13 because the proportion of students achieving the higher grades in national examinations is lower than national expectations. Overall, students make satisfactory progress given their starting points. Retention rates from Year 12 to Year 13 have been good for the last three years. Students say that they feel safe and they have a positive approach to being healthy and in developing healthy lifestyles. The care, guidance and support students receive in selecting their courses and in being supported through to examinations are good. Students are given a free choice of options and are able to select from a mix of BTEC and A-Level courses. However, good quality guidance is provided by staff pre- and post-GCSE results to help students in their choices. Students are involved with staff in setting their own challenging targets and in creating a pupil improvement plan. Teachers use a colour coded system, like that in the main school, to record students' progress against targets. Progress is closely monitored and strong support is given to both students and parents. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching are beginning to have a positive impact on students' progress. Responsibility for the leadership and management of the sixth form has recently changed. However, the building blocks for further improvement in sixth-form performance are now established, but these have not yet had time to impact on results. The capacity to improve further is good. Students in the sixth form act as good role models to younger students and are an integral part of the school. The sixth-formers do good work as peer mentors and in the local community, supervising activities and arranging fund-raising events for charity.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Replies to the inspection questionnaire were received from the parents/carers of approximately 15% of the students. This is lower than is normally experienced. The vast majority of parents who replied either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements. Such comments as, 'My child is really happy at school' and 'My child receives good care and support from the school' capture many common feelings expressed by parents or carers. These comments generally match the overall findings of the inspectors. A very small proportion of the parents' responses questioned the meaning of the colour coded

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'RAG' system and also the lack of consultation or discussion which took place at the parent forum meetings. Inspectors found no evidence to support the concerns either in the school's records or discussions held during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heysham High School Sports College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 168 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1095 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	45	82	49	8	5	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	70	42	93	55	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	75	45	79	47	4	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	38	91	54	4	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	69	41	91	54	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	32	94	56	11	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	36	93	55	7	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	65	39	85	51	4	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	42	84	50	4	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	68	40	83	49	7	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	26	104	62	5	3	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	77	46	82	49	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	52	74	44	2	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 September 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Heysham High School Sports College, Limes Avenue, Morecambe, Lancashire LA3 1HS

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you about your work and to listen to your views about the school. We have decided that Heysham is a satisfactory school which has several good and some outstanding features. We recognise that you, along with the teachers, parents and other helpers, all help to make it the way it is.

What we liked most about your school

- The good leadership of the school by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors.
- Your overall behaviour, manners and attitude towards school.
- The majority of the teaching is good and helps you to do your best.
- The outstanding care, guidance and support available for you.
- The outstanding range of curriculum opportunities available to you.
- The excellent way in which you adopt healthy lifestyles.
- The excellent way in which you contribute to the wider community.
- The positive feelings your parents and you have towards the school.

What we have asked your school to do now

Improve attainment in English, mathematics and the sixth form by:

- ensuring that the good and outstanding practice in teaching and learning is spread across all subject areas
- ensuring that teachers assess your work consistently and regularly and use the results to plan and match learning activities to your needs
- ensuring that strategies for tracking progress and planning improvements occur early enough to impact on your learning.

The inspection team hope you are pleased with the things we have said about your school and that you are proud of what you, your staff, governors and parents have achieved. We found our two days in the school to be a most welcoming and enjoyable experience.

Best wishes for the future

Brian Sharples

Her Majesty's Inspector

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