

Scalby School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121677
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	327546
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan McKenna

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	951
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Bartlett-Cook
Headteacher	Mrs Carey Chidwick
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2005
School address	Fieldstead Crescent Newby Scarborough North Yorkshire YO12 6TH
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The large majority of students attending this average size school are of White British heritage. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The area served by the school has broadly typical socio-economic features. The school has specialist status for technology and has the Artsmark Silver Award. It is a member of the local School Sports Partnership and is part of the North Yorkshire Eastern Area Behaviour Collaborative.

The school has experienced a great deal of turbulence in staffing over the past couple of years, with changes of teachers and leaders. At senior level there have been changes of headteacher, deputy headteacher and bursar. Since September the school has been led by an interim headteacher, who is the headteacher of another school in the local authority. There is also an interim deputy headteacher working in the school for three days a week.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its students an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Inadequacies in leadership and governance and turbulence in staffing have had a negative impact on the school's effectiveness, which has declined considerably since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching, students' behaviour and achievement are all inadequate. The interim headteacher has brought a clear vision to the school. Supported by other senior leaders, most of whom are relatively new in post, she has provided direction, created a constructive climate and raised staff morale. Many new management arrangements have been put in place to bring about improvement. However, whilst there are some early positive signs, many actions are too recent to demonstrate the full impact they need to have. Middle leadership is developing, but it is not yet consistently effective. Leaders are gaining a growing awareness of strengths and weaknesses, resulting from their greater involvement in monitoring activities. However, information gained from monitoring is not always evaluated rigorously enough to identify what action is necessary to bring about rapid improvement. Governance is inadequate, as it was at the previous inspection. The governing body has not held the school to account sufficiently. There is a very large deficit budget. These weaknesses result in the school having an inadequate capacity to improve.

Students enter Year 7 with standards that are broadly in line with the national average. However, they do not make the progress of which they are capable and their achievement is inadequate. This is reflected in standards attained by students leaving the school in Year 11 that have fallen over the past few years. Inspection evidence indicates that in 2008 the proportion of students gaining five or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics was significantly below average. There is too much variation in achievement across subjects. Teaching is not strong enough to ensure that students learn effectively. Some is good, but too much is inadequate across a wide range of subjects. This inconsistency was evident at the last inspection and has not been eliminated. Only recently have arrangements been improved for checking students' progress, despite this being an area of weakness at the last inspection. Nevertheless, the new procedures are enabling earlier identification of those who are underachieving. The curriculum is satisfactory following recent changes to broaden provision, especially the range of options available for students in Years 10 and 11. The range of extra-curricular activities is a strength of the provision.

The school's specialist status is having only a very limited impact, due to the lack of a clear strategy for its implementation. This was also the case at the last inspection. The use of specialist funding is not clear or documented. The school is unaware of its original specialist targets and is in the process of setting new ones. While there have been some positive developments recently, standards are not high enough in some of the specialist subjects, meaning that they are not equipped to contribute to improving standards across the school.

The care, guidance and support provided for students are satisfactory. There are positive features to the pastoral care. Specifically targeted and effective support is provided for students identified as having additional needs or who experience problems. There are clear strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. These are having some impact and most students

behave as expected. However, there is still a significant minority of students whose behaviour is not acceptable, especially around the school site, which makes behaviour inadequate overall. Most other aspects of personal development are satisfactory. Most students have cordial relationships with teachers and their peers. Attendance has improved and most students attend regularly.

The school is working with an increasing range of external agencies to help meet students' needs. However, it recognises that it has more work to do to engage parents fully.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure better achievement across subjects, especially English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so it enables students to learn more effectively.
- Improve the unacceptable behaviour of the significant minority of students.
- Improve the impact of the specialist status across the school.
- Ensure leaders at all levels, including governors, rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the school so they understand and take the actions necessary to increase the rate of improvement.
- Significantly reduce the deficit budget.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Overall, the standards students achieve are much too low when set against their capability and starting points. Whilst they make better progress across Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11 and attain broadly average standards by the age of 14, by the age of 16 standards are significantly below what they should be. Consequently, achievement is inadequate. GCSE results in recent years show too much variation across subjects. In 2008, provisional results were particularly low in a number of subjects including English language, mathematics, history, media and physical education; however, they were above average in English literature, drama, French and geography. They were also low in several of the specialist subjects, notably electronics, engineering and resistant materials, but were higher in textiles, food technology and information and communication technology (ICT). The school's improved tracking arrangements, which are resulting in earlier action being taken to tackle underachievement, means the picture is improving. Nevertheless, students are still not achieving their full potential, especially in English and mathematics. Well-targeted support boosts the progress of students who experience specific difficulties with their learning and their achievement is satisfactory overall. However, the progress made by some students with significant behavioural difficulties is not as good as it should be. It is only recently that sufficiently challenging targets have been set for students' attainment and it is too early for the impact to be felt.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most students say they enjoy school, especially when they are able to be involved practically in their lessons. Most conform to school rules and generally do as they are asked by their teachers in lessons. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Students generally understand how to keep safe and healthy and many participate in extra-curricular activities for sport. Some make a contribution to their own school community through, for example, acting as prefects or school council members. The members of the school council feel they are listened to and are making a difference. Students make a satisfactory

contribution to the broader community, through displays of artwork, for example, and collecting for charities. Most students say they feel safe in lessons. Bullying does occur and some parents expressed concerns about this. However, a sample of students who have experienced bullying report that the school has dealt effectively with the situation. Although most students behave satisfactorily, overall, behaviour is inadequate. Low level disruption occurs in lessons, especially when teaching does not engage students' interest. A significant minority of students are loud around the school site, resulting in an atmosphere that is often too boisterous. Exclusions are high, but are reducing. Low achievement in English and mathematics means that students do not develop important basic skills well enough to contribute to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

As at the last inspection, the quality of teaching is too variable and too much is inadequate. Consequently students make inadequate progress. Much teaching, whilst not necessarily inadequate, is generally not strong enough to ensure that the students' rate of progress is consistently good enough to enable all to achieve as well as they should. In such lessons, teachers do not make use of information about students' different ability levels to plan work that meets fully their range of needs. Consequently, some students are not appropriately challenged or supported. Some teachers focus more on organisational matters in their planning, than on what students need to learn. This leads to activities that do not promote sufficient progress or enable students to be actively involved in their learning. Such lessons tend to fail to gain students' interest, resulting in a reduction in concentration and deterioration in behaviour. By contrast, in the better lessons teachers know exactly what they want students to learn, use their good subject knowledge to give precise explanations and plan interesting tasks that require students to take some responsibility for their progress. On these occasions, students are engaged and learn well. The quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always inform students how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

At the last inspection the curriculum was inadequate. Although the school is carrying out a review of the curriculum in order to make it better and more cost-effective, relatively recent changes mean that it is now meeting students' needs better than previously. The school has introduced different pathways for students in Years 10 and 11. These enable students to make option choices that are more appropriate to their different needs and aptitudes with an increasing number of vocational courses. Apart from delivering a daily act of collective worship, statutory requirements are now met. All students study ICT and, also through the specialism, there are more opportunities for gifted and talented students in art. The specialist subjects are not making a strong enough contribution to the curriculum overall. Citizenship is taught within the personal, social and health education curriculum and students value the opportunities to be involved in a number of local business and enterprise projects such as the setting up of a travel agency in collaboration with a local firm. Nevertheless, the school recognises the need to strengthen work-related learning and careers education. The curriculum is enriched well through, for example, activities in art, drama and sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school ensures that students feel cared for and that they can approach staff with problems should they need to. Vulnerable students receive extra care and support which helps make them feel secure in school. The support provided for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps them access the curriculum and allows them to achieve satisfactorily. The range of strategies to deal with unacceptable behaviour has been extended and their impact is monitored. Improvements are evident, but they have not yet resulted in satisfactory behaviour for all students. The school takes reported incidents of bullying seriously and deals with them accordingly. Appropriate checks for safeguarding students are made and meet latest government requirements. Actions taken to improve attendance have been effective, although the number of persistent absentees remains above target. The new arrangements for tracking students' progress are more rigorous than previously and there is better analysis of the information gained. However, whilst these recent arrangements have started to improved the academic guidance given to students they have yet to demonstrate their impact fully. For example, whilst students are aware of the targets they are given, too many do not know what to do to reach them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Overall, leadership and management have too little effect so that standards are too low and students make slow progress in their work. Most senior leaders are relatively inexperienced, though they have worked hard within their areas of responsibility since taking up post. The more strategic approach, since the arrival of the interim headteacher, is helping to increase the effectiveness of their work. It is also promoting consistency of practice, for example, in the line management of middle leaders, but it is much too soon to see the full impact. School leaders are being held more accountable, are better supported and are developing in confidence. However, middle leadership is not consistently effective; leadership of the specialism is also weak. Whilst there is a growing awareness of the weaknesses that need to be tackled, there is not always clear enough identification of how this needs to be done. For example, not all lesson observations result in clear and pertinent points for action. Some judgements the school made about itself prior to the inspection are over-generous. While new management procedures are positive, most are too recent to be securing the required improvements in outcomes for students.

Despite its efforts since the last inspection, governance remains inadequate. The governing body has not ensured the school's effectiveness or achieved value for money. A new business manager is in the process of investigating the very large budget deficit in order that a recovery plan to reduce it can be drawn up, but this work is not complete.

The school is working more effectively with a wider range of external agencies to help meet students' needs. However, it recognises that it has further work to do to engage the parent body fully. Half of parents who made their views known to the inspection team were positive about the school, especially about very recent improvements. However, half expressed concerns, especially about students' behaviour, the progress they make and the quality of teaching they receive.

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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
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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	4
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

As you know, your school was inspected recently. This letter is to inform you about the results of the inspection. However, first I would like to thank you on behalf of the inspection team for talking with us and helping us to reach our judgements.

Your school has some satisfactory features. It cares for you all and it provides extra support for those of you who particularly need it. The range of options available in Key Stage 4 helps to meet your different interests. A good range of extra-curricular sports activities are on offer which you enjoy. Many of you do what teachers ask you to do in lessons, behave appropriately and attend regularly. Some of you make a helpful contribution to the community.

However, overall we judge that your school is not effective enough. This is because you are not achieving as well as you are capable of across all subjects, especially English and mathematics. Although in some lessons, you are given interesting and challenging work, too much teaching is not helping you learn fast enough and there is too much variation in quality. Too many of you do not behave well enough. The specialist status is also not having the impact it should on your learning. Your new interim headteacher is determined to improve your school and is helping other leaders become more effective. However, they have not yet managed to check rigorously enough on what needs to be done and what actions are necessary to ensure the school improves quickly enough. Similarly, the governing body of the school is not doing an effective enough job and there are problems with the school's budget.

We have asked the school to improve all of these areas. We think the school needs some extra support to help it improve more quickly. We have therefore decided it requires special measures. This means that extra support will be given to the school and inspectors will check how effectively it is improving.

You can help the leaders and teachers in your school by behaving well and working hard in lessons.