

Fazakerley High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104692
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	336348
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Patrick Geraghty 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	795
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Doherty
Headteacher	Mr N Fleming
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 33 lessons and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the chair of governors. They observed the school's work and documentation was scrutinised including information which tracks the academic and personal progress of students, detailed analysis of students' attainment and progress, school development planning, the school self-evaluation, records of recent classroom monitoring, minutes from meetings of the governing body, and evidence to demonstrate how the school supports students. Inspectors also examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure that it meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 64 parental questionnaires were scrutinised along with questionnaires returned by a representative sample of pupils and staff.

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

- students' attainment and progress, especially in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4
- if teaching and learning were sufficiently challenging to promote better outcomes for students, particularly in English
- the impact of curriculum development, including the contribution of the specialist subject, on increasing engagement and improving students' outcomes
- the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by leaders and managers at all levels to drive improvement
- how effectively the leadership team tackle any underperformance.

Information about the school

Fazakerley High School is a slightly smaller than average mixed comprehensive serving communities within the top 6% of social deprivation nationally and with high unemployment. The number of pupils who claim free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average, although the proportion of those with a statement to support their special educational need is below. Nearly all students are of White British heritage and the number of students who speak English as an additional language is low. The school is a specialist school for engineering and has won the Rolls Royce award for Engineering 2009. The school is increasingly popular as demonstrated by increased enrolment in Years 7 and 8. There is a collaborative sixth form with a number of local schools.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where standards are rising and the overall progress made by students is good. Senior leaders and staff are effectively tackling a historical background of underachievement. Standards, particularly in mathematics, have risen because of a strong focus on the effective use of targeted strategies. The level of students' work examined by inspectors was at least satisfactory and much was good. Early entry GCSE English and GCSE modular test results in mathematics are having an impact on improving standards. The school recognises the need to raise standards further at Key Stage 4, especially in English. Paramount to the school ethos is the promotion of a culture where respect for all is central. Behaviour is good. Attendance is low and below the national average. However, effective strategies to tackle this have resulted in rapid improvement. School leaders ensure that the Every Child Matters' outcomes are central to the school's systems.

Teaching and learning are good. There is much good teaching, particularly in mathematics where lively and imaginative sessions promote good, active and enthusiastic learning. A broad curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4, matches students' needs well. The engineering specialism has made a positive contribution to offering additional opportunities at both key stages and in the sixth form. There is a strong emphasis on enrichment and an effective approach to the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The development of literacy and oracy is not sufficiently embedded across the curriculum or within English lessons. Care, guidance and support are good with a strong focus on those most vulnerable and those at risk of not achieving to their potential. Good guidance and careers advice has contributed to a significant increase in progression to post-16 education.

Effective leadership by the headteacher is ably supported by his senior team: they have a firm focus on improving achievement and raising aspirations. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school is aware of where further improvements need to be made. Equality of opportunities is well promoted. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and are both critical and supportive in their efforts to promote raising standards and good community links. Safeguarding procedures are good and systems robust. The school provides good value for money and has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the percentage of students gaining good grades at GCSE in English and mathematics. In particular, improve the percentage of higher grades in English

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through the promotion of more challenging teaching and learning.

- Embed an effective literacy and oracy strategy across the curriculum. Improve the celebration of writing and the engagement in dialogue and debate so that all students are sufficiently challenged and engaged.
- Improve attendance rates further so that they reach the national average by 2011 and are above by 2012.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students enter the school with below average attainment. Low literacy levels present a barrier to learning. Overall, students make good progress. From 2007 to 2009 the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades increased from 47% to 80%, significantly above the national average. The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics over a similar period has increased by 17%. However, this key indicator remains below the national average. Students do less well in English than mathematics particularly in the achievement of grades A* to B. Over the last year, effective and targeted strategies have had a positive impact on raising performance. The use of assessment data to identify and rectify students' underachievement has improved. Evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of current work, examination work already marked and moderated and the school's tracking procedures indicate a further improvement in standards and progress. Data indicate that intervention strategies, especially around the GCSE D/C borderline, are having a positive impact at Key Stage 4. Currently 48% of Year 11 students have achieved grades A* to C in mathematics and 32% in English. Of those targeted in the D/C borderline the vast majority are on line to achieve at least a C in English. Students identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Behaviour is good. In over 80% of lessons observed inspectors rated behaviour as good or better. Students are treated with respect and as individuals and they in turn demonstrate tolerance and respect. Relationships at all levels are strong. Students are well cared for, feel secure and confident within the supportive environment provided. The tutorial programme and curriculum cover topics which promote and develop healthy attitudes and lifestyles. Additional learning opportunities are provided after school and are popular. Most students feel that the school is a safe place. They are aware of how to stay safe and their knowledge of internet safety is good. Students are making a good contribution to the local community including sixth-form mentoring of primary school pupils. Local community cohesion is thoroughly promoted with well developed links with community groups and organisations that enhance the student experience. Over the last three years, the school has been particularly successful in reducing the numbers of students not in employment, education or training from 11% to 5% in 2008. Students' preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory. Attendance has improved because of improved monitoring and intervention. Comparative data for the autumn term 2008 and 2009 shows an improvement from 87% to 92%. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is well led by a strong

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religious studies department.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned. In the better lessons challenging approaches to assessment for learning and the use of focused, pair and group work result in good progress. Good relationships between staff and students, and between students, contribute to a positive learning atmosphere. Behaviour is good. Imaginative use of resources enthuses students, captures their interest and maintains their engagement. Teaching assistants are used well and make a strong contribution to the quality of learning for individual students. Teachers provide good quality feedback orally and through marking. Much good practice was observed in mathematics where lessons were exciting, challenging and engaged students to actively promote their learning. In lessons judged to be less effective teaching lacked challenge and pace was mundane. In these lessons, there is too much teacher talk and opportunities are missed to engage students more fully in their learning and to develop their speaking and thinking skills. In English, there was limited celebration of writing or strategies to

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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develop oracy and few of these lessons used paired or group work to promote learning. The curriculum is good, well organised and meets statutory requirements. The range of opportunities at Key Stage 4 is especially broad and impressively meets the needs of all students. The development of BTEC courses and the school specialism in engineering has helped expand the range and appropriateness of courses. Early entry to national examinations for Year 11 has helped identify gaps in students' learning and inform appropriate intervention strategies. There is strong promotion of numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). For example, ICT is used in many instances to reinforce learning. Literacy and oracy are less well developed both in English and across the curriculum. Enrichment and extra-curricular provision are of good quality. Trips abroad and regular out of school excursions are popular and add to students' enjoyment of learning.

Care, guidance and support are good. Transition arrangements are well planned and provide opportunities for early intervention to support learning. The school has established good relationships with local primaries. Well planned transition between key stages ensures that choices are appropriate. Communications between staff and students are good, as are those between the school and parents and carers. Vulnerable pupils are very well cared for. Student support services provide very good support so that issues that might have arisen in class, and disrupted learning, are resolved early. Good links with outside agencies enhance the good care and support offered. Very good one to one support is highly valued and appreciated by students. The tracking and monitoring of student progress is now more effective. Good careers guidance has seen a significant increase in those progressing to further education. The productive use of registration time is too variable across the 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	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Through well focused improvement strategies, the headteacher, senior managers and staff have successfully developed a well ordered and increasingly ambitious school community. Senior and middle management are clear about their roles in securing improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and self-critical. Carefully considered and realistic target-setting ensures that the effective use of data guides leaders' challenging targets. There is good analysis of religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in terms of attainment, achievement and progression. The quality of teaching and learning are

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monitored well and weaknesses are now tackled quickly and effectively.

Community cohesion is good. The school knows its community well and interacts with it, linking well with not only parents and carers but also grandparents. Opportunities are provided through the curriculum, and in particular a very strong religious education department, for students to appreciate their place within the world community. Initiatives to understand the wider British community are currently underdeveloped. Partnerships are good and well promoted. Links with external providers and agencies add to the students' learning and the good quality of care, support and guidance. There is effective promotion of equality of opportunity through support programmes, the curriculum and an increasing range of additional activities. The school also provides strong and diverse role models within the staff to promote the development and aspirations of all students. Governance is good. Governors are critical and evaluative in monitoring the school's progress; they also provide a significant source of support and good links with local groups and agencies. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and are regularly reviewed. Systems are very robust. Given the school's recent track record and good current trends it has a good capacity to achieve further improvement.

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

Sixth form

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Students show maturity, are good ambassadors for the school and enjoy their time in the sixth form. They demonstrate a commitment to their studies. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good teaching. The curriculum offers a very broad range of over 50

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courses. Students speak highly of the pastoral support they receive and regard their positive relationships with staff as a key strength. Students receive good advice and guidance on future employment and further and higher education opportunities. Increasing numbers are continuing their education post-16 with a tradition of progression to university being nurtured and promoted against a background of very low local participation in higher education. Leadership of the sixth form is satisfactory. The school recognises the need to develop more robust monitoring, tracking and intervention strategies to improve student outcomes. While sixth-formers contribute to extra-curricular activities, opportunities for them to act as achievement and aspirational mentors for the lower school are limited.

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	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from approximately 64 parents and carers. Analysis of responses indicates that the vast majority are happy with their child's experience at school and that appropriate steps are taken to ensure that their child is well prepared for the future. A number of parents raised concerns about the school informing them of their child's progress. However, the inspectors found evidence that the school communicates regularly with parents on such issues as progress. Some concerns were also raised about behaviour. Inspectors are satisfied that the school deals effectively with incidences of bullying or poor behaviour that occur.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fazakerley High School 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 795 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	27	38	61	3	5	3	5
The school keeps my child safe	20	32	35	56	3	5	3	5
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	21	34	55	8	13	5	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	24	35	56	4	6	4	6
The teaching is good at this school	10	16	42	68	4	6	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	15	34	55	10	16	4	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	15	41	66	6	10	3	5
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)	8	13	33	53	4	6	3	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	13	40	65	3	5	4	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	21	33	53	6	10	4	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	13	35	56	9	15	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	16	26	30	48	7	11	4	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	29	32	52	7	11	4	6

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.



Dear Students

Inspection of Fazakerley High School, Liverpool L10 1LB

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome that you gave my colleagues and me when we inspected your school this week. We would also like to commend you for your good behaviour. We would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with us.

The reason we came to your school was to find out what was going well and what could be improved. Here is what we found.

- Fazakerley High School is a good school.
- Your attainment is satisfactory and the progress you make is good. The standards you achieve are rising, especially in mathematics.
- The way you are taught and the way that you learn is good.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on very well as a community.

The leaders in your school worked with us to decide on some ways in which the pursuit of better provision could become a reality. We decided that to achieve this, the school should:

- raise attainment at Key Stage 4 so that outcomes for five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics improve further and more rapidly, in particular the achievement of grades A* to B at GCSE in English
- improve the ways in which you develop and celebrate your writing and your oral skills so as to better enhance your learning
- improve your attendance rates to reach national averages and better.

You can help your school to improve further by ensuring everyone focuses on the pursuit of excellence for all of you and trying hard in your studies so that you can achieve your full potential in life.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty

Her Majesty's Inspector

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