

Bingley Grammar School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107439
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336884
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Honoree Gordon HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1910
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Chris Quinn
Headteacher	Mr Chris Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 35 lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior and middle leadership teams, the chair of governors, the staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation; its plans for improvement; records related to safeguarding; the school's data on students' progress. The inspectors received 400 parental questionnaires and also read questionnaire responses from students and from staff.

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

- students' progress by the end of Key Stage 4
- the quality of teaching and how well the assessment system works in practice
- how well the school is responding to a more diverse student population
- the sixth form as an area of strength of the school
- safeguarding procedures.

Information about the school

Bingley Grammar school is a very large secondary school. One quarter of the students are in the sixth form. The school has specialist status for business and enterprise, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT).

Students enter the school with above average attainment. There are relatively few students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and until recently the student population was predominantly White British. Following a change in admissions criteria, the school now has a more diverse intake. Around one quarter of the current Year 7 are of minority ethnic origin, a considerable increase on recent years.

The school is scheduled to be rebuilt in the very near future under the Building Schools for the Future initiative.

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

Bingley Grammar is a satisfactory school, with a high number of good features. Leaders and managers at all levels are ambitious for the school and are successfully driving forward their plans for improvement. The impact of these can be seen in students' attainment, which continues to rise year-on-year. Together with the positive impact seen in other aspects of school life, this indicates good capacity for the school to sustain its improvement.

The school has taken decisive action on the points for improvement listed at the time of the previous inspection. For example, communication with parents is much better. The assessment system gives regular information to parents, though as yet, teachers are not using it to best advantage when they plan and deliver lessons. As a result, students are not always sufficiently challenged because work is not geared to their particular needs. This affects students' rates of progress. The outcomes for individuals and groups of students are satisfactory because students' learning and progress are satisfactory overall, but could be better. Encouragingly, the school's analysis of GCSE examination results for 2009 shows that boys have made more progress than in recent years.

The school is aware that students do not all make good progress. Leaders are rightly concentrating on improving the quality of lessons, so that all students can make faster progress. The school is making good inroads into this, but some lessons are better than others. Students' views, as expressed to the inspectors and in their questionnaire responses, back this up: though frequently good, teaching is too variable. Inspectors saw many good lessons and in the sixth form, lessons are often outstanding. The sixth form is good: students thrive here and the academic support provided for them is outstanding. Students' attainment is particularly high in religious education and in psychology.

The outcomes for students' achievement, enjoyment and well-being are largely good. Behaviour is good, in lessons and around school, despite the very cramped accommodation. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, the school's population is more diverse than in the recent past. The school has yet to explore fully how best to respond to this, for example, how this might influence its decisions on what is provided for students, in a way that can promote equality and diversity and cohesion between its different communities further. At present, the promotion of equal opportunity and community cohesion are satisfactory. There are very few incidents of racism or bullying and students are confident that the school tackles any such incidents effectively.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school has adopted recommended good practice

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across all areas of its work. It works well with other agencies to help safeguard students. The school takes good account of students' views and acts upon them to improve its procedures. Staff are proactive in supporting young people whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Students say that they feel safe and are happy in school.

Staff care, support and guide students well. There are good systems to support students, including a mentoring system for older students that is helping them to achieve more highly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students make good or better progress through:
 - increasing the proportion of lessons which are good or better, across the school
 - refining the use of assessment data by teachers to ensure that activities meet the learning needs of all the students.
- Promote community cohesion further, to respond to the changing composition of the school's population by :
 - analysing the needs of the different communities whose children attend the school and using this information when making decisions about the school's provision and plans for improvement
 - identifying further ways in which the school and its students can engage with different sections of the community
 - exploring opportunities within the curriculum to deepen students' understanding and awareness of other cultures and so enhance the promotion of equality and diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Students' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is above average and has improved over the past three years, particularly in science. The proportion of students who gain a good number of GCSEs, including English and mathematics, is significantly above the national average. This means that students are very well equipped to enter sixth form or gain employment.

Very few students leave school with no qualifications at all. Almost without exception, students proceed into higher education, training or employment. Students apply their skills in oracy, literacy, numeracy, and ICT securely in other subjects and they have good opportunities to develop enterprise skills. The vast majority of parents feel that the school prepares their child well for his or her future and students agree.

Students' enjoyment and achievement, including those students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are satisfactory overall. The amount of progress that students make between Year 7 and Year 11 has increased over the past three years and is satisfactory. In particular, the amount of progress boys make has improved

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because of the 'assertive mentoring' scheme and a more flexible curriculum. The whole-school tracking system quickly identifies students who are underachieving. This, plus the more personalised curriculum, has improved the progress that students make. The assessment system identifies gifted and talented students at an early stage. Those students receive a varied programme that meets their needs, including the opportunity to study triple science at Key Stage 4. However, staff do not use the information the system provides to ensure that all lessons meet the needs and interests of different groups of students. This acts as a barrier to faster progress for some.

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	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school's curriculum is good and it meets students' needs well. The curriculum has become much more personalised, with flexibility in GCSE options, for example. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular opportunities, with very high levels of student participation. Students say that they enjoy school; the vast majority of parents agree. The school's specialisms contribute significantly to this and are a real strength. Funds have been used partly to provide a substantial number of computers.

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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The strong focus throughout the school on enterprise learning is enabling the students to become more independent learners. Increasingly, there are opportunities for those students who are gifted to take examinations early, providing some extra challenge for them.

Teachers and leaders have high expectations of what students can do. Teachers have good subject knowledge and deploy a widening variety of teaching styles, which fosters students' enthusiasm for learning. Students usually show interest and are engaged in their work. However, teachers do not use new technologies effectively in many lessons; there are low numbers of interactive whiteboards for a school of this size. There are an increasing number of lessons where teaching is good or better. These have good pace, high levels of enjoyment, and where learning is the focus of all activity. In other lessons, challenge is low or not well directed and teachers tend to talk for too long. Students are not inspired to achieve and the more able students are not sufficiently challenged. The school has a small number of teaching assistants who, while effective, are not able to meet the demand for support in lessons to accelerate progress for the less able or for those with learning difficulties.

Assessment is robust, systematic and accurate. Students are well informed about the levels they are working at and the progress they are making towards targets. Managers are using the assessment data effectively to improve students' achievement. All staff have easy access to an excellent tracking system. However, too often teachers do not refer to this information when planning and delivering lessons. As result, they often fail to take account of the range of learners in the group and do not cater for their different needs and aptitudes. Teachers monitor work effectively, though marking is inconsistent. The school provides good care, guidance and support for its students. The staff identify those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and discuss their needs with their primary school to ensure that the transition to Bingley Grammar school is smooth. These students are supported through the 'achievement centre' and, sometimes, in lessons with learning support assistants to ensure that they make satisfactory progress. However, the school recognises that these students need special support in lessons and has put in place a training programme for all staff. It is too early to judge the impact of this on outcomes for students.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

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The school has an ambitious vision for further improvement. The headteacher has harnessed the energy and enthusiasm of an able group of senior and middle leaders who have clear plans for this and who have shown that they have the skills to be able to deliver. Furthermore, leaders have begun to work in partnership with parents on developments for the future.

Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Of late, they are beginning to provide better challenge to the headteacher and so hold the school more accountable for its decisions. Together, the governors and headteacher have ensured that a large financial deficit uncovered after the previous inspection was successfully and promptly paid back. Despite the severe constraints this meant on what the school could provide, the upward trend in attainment has continued. As more staffing resources are freed up, the school is now is poised to move forward.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

The sixth form is an area of strength and is well led and managed. Most students make at least good progress and some make outstanding progress. Attainment is above average, though there is still some variation across subjects. The vast majority of students proceed to higher education, usually obtaining their first choice of university. Some aspects of the sixth form are outstanding: academic tutoring is strong; students are highly supportive of each other and mature very quickly; some of the teaching is outstanding. The curriculum meets most students' needs well and now includes a wide range of subjects. However, there are still relatively few vocational opportunities as an

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alternative choice to A levels.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents are happy with the school. Some students and a small minority of parents expressed concern about the insufficient time the school allocates to physical education lessons. Inspectors agree that this is a shortcoming. Nevertheless, students' responses to leading healthy lifestyles are good. Many students take part in sports.

Regarding the help the school gives to parents to be able to support their children, the assessment system provides regular interim reports on students' progress. The school runs an increasing number of information evenings for parents, which are well attended. The school has improved its communication with parents since the previous inspection. In their questionnaire responses, parents commented very positively on the induction procedures for students joining the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bingley Grammar 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 400 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,910 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	126	32	250	63	23	6	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	111	28	269	68	13	3	4	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	87	23	244	64	50	13	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	88	24	255	69	25	7	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	91	24	257	68	27	7	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	14	254	68	64	17	5	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	14	245	64	74	19	7	2
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)	88	24	251	68	28	8	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	22	251	67	36	10	5	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	101	26	238	61	42	11	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	56	16	228	66	57	16	6	2
The school is led and managed effectively	101	27	254	68	17	5	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	125	32	246	62	24	6	1	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

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 Bingley Grammar School, Bingley, BD16 2RS

I am writing to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school and to tell you what we found.

Your school is satisfactory overall and a high number of aspects are good.

Your headteacher and senior leaders have acted on the points that were raised at the time of the previous inspection. For example, the school's communication with your parents is now much better. The headteacher and leaders have a clear vision for how the school could improve further. We believe that they have good capacity to make this happen.

The specialisms of the school are having a good impact on what is provided for you and are helping you to become independent learners.

The sixth form is good and some aspects, such as the academic tutorial support, are outstanding. Sixth form students make good progress and reach above average standards. Students are highly supportive of each other. Some of the teaching is outstanding. Examination results vary somewhat across subjects, but religious education and psychology stand out highly.

You told us that you enjoy school and that you feel safe there. You are confident that the staff deal effectively with any rare instances of bullying or racism. In their questionnaire responses, a very large majority of your parents told us that they were happy with your school.

Here are the rest of our findings:

Outcomes are satisfactory overall, with a number of areas of strength:

- You reach good standards in your work: examination results are above national averages and are continuing to rise.
- Your behaviour is good, despite a very cramped site.
- The staff care, guide and support you well.
- There are good procedures to help safeguard your well-being.
- The curriculum is good; it is flexible and increasingly personalised so that it meets your needs well.
- You develop well the skills that you need for the next stage in your education or

employment.

- Your participation in extra-curricular activities, particularly sports, is high; this is helping to keep you healthy.

You are making satisfactory progress. That is about what we would expect to find, given your starting points when you join the school. However, we feel that you could make faster progress. We agree with you that the quality of teaching still varies, though we saw many good lessons.

There is a good system for assessing your progress, but the staff do not use all the information this provides when they plan their lessons. For example, to decide what tasks or activities groups and individual students should be doing in each lesson. We think this would help you all progress more quickly.

We feel that the school could do more to reach out to the different communities that you come from and could build in more opportunities in your lessons for you to think about how you all get on.

So we have asked your headteacher to ensure that you all make good progress by:

- increasing the number of good (or better) lessons
- improving how well teachers use the information from your assessments to plan and deliver lessons that meet all your different learning needs.

We have also asked him to find ways in which the school can get involved with different sections of the community and to explore opportunities within the curriculum to deepen your understanding and awareness of different cultures.

We hope that you will support the headteacher and his staff as they make these changes which are aimed at further improving your school. It may be that through the school council you, too, could contribute your ideas.

Yours sincerely

Ms Honoree Gordon

Her Majesty's Inspector

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