

Ormesby School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111741
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	337730
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Farrow 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	815
Appropriate authority	Interim executive
Chair	Mr N Pocklington
Headteacher	Mr S Burrows
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Approximately 60% of the time was spent observing students learning. The inspectors visited 33 lessons, observing 30 teachers and held meetings with the chair of the interim executive board, a group of partners who work with the school, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's assessment information, students' books and portfolios of their work, the school's raising achievement plan and a range of policies and documentation including the school's safeguarding arrangements. They also scrutinised inspection questionnaires completed by a sample of students, members of staff and the 52 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers.

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

- current standards and students' progress, particularly in English and mathematics
- the use of assessment to improve outcomes for all students
- the impact of leadership and management of the senior leadership team, middle leaders and the interim executive board
- the impact of the school's provision on students' enjoyment and well-being.

Information about the school

Ormesby is an averaged size secondary school. The majority of students are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are more girls than boys, but the proportions vary between year groups. Virtually all students are of White British origin. The proportion deemed to have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. The school has a resource base for students with physical difficulties and has a significantly higher-than-average proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs. The school has been a specialist engineering college since 2003 and is currently part of the government's National Challenge programme which is aimed at raising standards in secondary schools. It is subject to a new-build as part of Middlesbrough Council's Building Schools for the Future programme and the new building is due to open in September 2010. An interim executive board replaced the governing body in November 2009 as a result of the local authority's statutory powers of intervention in a school where they have concerns.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to students' attainment, progress, and consistency in the use of assessment of students' work to inform learning in all subjects. Students' attainment is low and their achievement is inadequate because of the legacy of low attainment and the continued inconsistencies in students' progress across subjects and in year groups. Recent changes have boosted performance but this has not happened quickly enough, particularly in Key Stage 3.

Attainment on entry to the school in Year 7 has been below the national average for a number of years. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 has remained low overall, and students' progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 has been variable. In 2008, the majority of students made good progress given their starting points. This was not the case in 2009, where few students made the expected levels of progress. Senior leaders' better focus on teaching, learning and assessment and the now good curriculum has boosted performance and students' current rates of progress, particularly in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4. Results from early-entry examinations show the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C, including English and mathematics, has already exceeded that of summer 2009 and meets the challenging 2010 targets. Nevertheless, tracking information suggests that attainment at Key Stage 4 will remain below that found nationally and students' progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 remains below expectations. Students who are potentially vulnerable, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and looked after students make satisfactory progress in their learning because of the effective individual care and support provided to them.

Despite some improvements in the quality of teaching, it is not yet consistently good enough to fully tackle the history of underachievement. In spite of concerted action by senior leaders to raise aspirations, a few teachers still have too little ambition on behalf of their students. In subjects such as art and design, engineering, design technology, English and mathematics at Key Stage 4 teaching is often good and occasionally outstanding. This is not always the case at Key Stage 3 or in other subjects because some teachers do not effectively assess what students need to learn next, or use assessment information about students' prior learning to ensure lessons challenge and interest them sufficiently; particularly higher-ability students. The quality and effectiveness of marking and feedback is too inconsistent.

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The school has a number of strengths and prides itself rightly, on its successful inclusion of students with physical difficulties, the good care, guidance and pastoral support it provides and students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. The school's approach to managing behaviour has made a positive difference. Students generally behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite, friendly and supportive of each other. Until recently, the approach has had little impact on reducing the high number of days lost to fixed-term exclusion and, therefore, behaviour is judged satisfactory overall. Despite efforts made, attendance remains low and the school has not managed to drive down the proportion of students who are persistently absent.

The senior leadership team are working hard to secure improvement and are becoming more successful in this endeavour, as seen in the improvements in the quality of teaching and progress students are now making, particularly at Key Stage 4. The good practice seen in some subjects is beginning to be spread across the school.

Consequently, leaders have satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money is inadequate because student outcomes are inadequate overall.

Senior leaders have developed a self-evaluation process that provides a broadly accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, they are aware that the quality of middle leadership is variable and actions are in place to make sure that all are held to account as effectively as the leaders of English, mathematics, science and engineering. Assessment systems at Key Stage 4 are developing, but the lack of an effective whole-school tracking system means leaders do not have a regular strategic overview of students' progress, nor are they able to successfully evaluate the impact of interventions or other actions intended to bring about school improvement. Planning for improvement is satisfactory, but does not include targets or milestones so that progress can be monitored rigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of teaching on students' learning, attainment and progress by:
 - eradicating inconsistencies in its quality and ensuring teachers always have high expectations of all students
 - ensuring the outcomes of formal, regular monitoring of teaching and learning lead to strategies to enhance teachers' skills, and the sharing of good practice
 - consistently using assessment and information about students' prior attainment to plan work and lessons that meet the learning needs of all students
 - ensuring that lessons provide interesting and varied tasks that challenge students of all abilities
 - ensuring all teachers are using questioning to challenge students to think more deeply about their learning and to develop their oracy skills
 - providing more opportunities for students' self and peer-evaluation of their work to develop their analytical, critical and independence skills

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- involving students more regularly in assessing their work and providing accurate and regular feedback on written work to guide students on how to improve further.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring information systems are used to provide a regular strategic overview of the performance of individuals and groups to enable the effective evaluation of students' progress and the impact of actions and interventions
 - developing the expertise of all managers in relation to monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of their area of responsibility and of the school
 - holding all managers to account for the effective use of regular assessment information in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring the monitoring and review strategies within the raising achievement plan include agreed milestones and measurable success criteria
 - continuing to develop strategies to improve attendance and to reduce the number of persistent absentees
 - ensuring that behaviour management strategies help to reduce the number of student days lost to fixed-period exclusion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Students' attainment is generally improving; particularly at Key Stage 4 and more students are now making satisfactory progress in lessons. Some make good progress, particularly in art and design, engineering and English and mathematics at Key Stage 4. However, despite improvements, attainment remains low overall and students' progress has not been rapid enough to tackle the underachievement from previous years in a number of subjects and in some lessons. Improvements in target setting and progress tracking are also beginning to help students to make better progress, but this is not fully embedded across all the school. Students generally display positive attitudes in lessons and often work conscientiously.

Students have a satisfactory understanding of how to stay fit and well and eat healthily, although not all apply this knowledge when making choices. Physical education is popular as are the range of after-school sporting activities. Students have a strong sense of belonging to the school and say they feel safe and enjoy their time here. The headteacher places a high importance on listening to, and acting upon the views of students and they make a good contribution to the school and the local community, for example, in their roles as school councillors, prefects and student mediators. They have also been involved in the development of the new building through consultation, and in the appointment of staff. A number of students, in collaboration with the Wildlife Trust, have worked to improve the local environment.

Students leave school adequately prepared for their future lives. Whilst the number attaining GCSEs, in English and mathematics is low, much higher proportions achieve functional skills in English and mathematics. The number of students continuing their

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education, entering employment or training in 2009 was higher than both local and national averages. The engineering specialism is now making a positive difference to students' achievement, enjoyment and their future opportunities after school. Specialist subject targets are generally met. The specialism is making a particularly good contribution to raising aspirations and achievements in the local educational community through successful leadership, outreach and partnership working in local primary, secondary and special schools and within the wider community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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?

The quality of teaching varies from inadequate to outstanding. An improving proportion is judged good or better, but too much satisfactory and sometimes barely satisfactory teaching remains, which continues to hinder students' faster rate of progress. Relationships are good and there is a calm atmosphere in nearly all lessons due to the effective behaviour management strategies. Where students learn well, teachers hold high expectations and have good subject knowledge. Teaching is pacy, challenges students and on occasions, encourages them to work independently and discuss their

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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own ideas. In such lessons, good use of regular assessment information of students' prior learning makes sure planning and work is matched to the different abilities in class. In less satisfactory and some satisfactory lessons, teachers are not making effective use of such information; too much teacher-talk restricts students' abilities to develop ideas confidently. In these lessons, not all students know their targets or how well they are doing because marking and assessment are ineffective. Consequently, students do not always know what they need to do to improve further.

The curriculum has improved over recent years through the development of a wider range of vocational courses and the engineering diploma. This is making a positive difference to students' enjoyment and achievement, particularly in Key Stage 4. Improvements in the English and in the mathematics curriculum are reaping rewards, for example, the increase in the proportion of students already attaining five good GCSEs including these subjects. A similar picture is evident in subjects such as art and design, and design technology. Senior leaders are aware that the Key Stage 3 curriculum is not as strong and have already consulted students to create a more diverse curriculum from next September. The curriculum is well-supported by enrichment afternoons which students say adds to their enjoyment. The school goes out of the way to develop students' individual interests, such as providing individual music lessons to students who request these. Sporting and outdoor opportunities for students with physical disabilities who have a talent and interest in sport, have led to notable successes.

Strong pastoral care and guidance pervades the school. There has been a determined focus on improving students' behaviour and this has helped to develop the tangibly calm atmosphere and welcoming environment for students. Good care and support to potentially vulnerable students, as well as those at risk of exclusion is helping to build students' self-esteem and interest in learning. There are good transition arrangements from primary school and into life after school. Students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive appropriate information and advice about future career pathways and are aspirational about their futures. Links with partners such as the careers service are particularly good for students with disabilities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

Senior leaders have a clear view of what needs to improve. They are beginning to

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embed improved systems for monitoring the quality of teaching. This is making a positive difference to its quality and impact on students' learning, although leaders know there is still much more to do. The recently established interim executive board is beginning to successfully challenge and support the senior leadership team in their joint quest to secure more rapid improvement. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and there are effective systems in place to ensure the safety of students. Senior leaders and staff work tenaciously to support students and their families, particularly those who are facing challenges in their lives. Students in need of additional support, or who are in danger of discrimination or inequality, are quickly identified. They receive good additional support and care or help with their learning, from within the school, or from the strong partnership working with a range of agencies. For example, good partnership working has helped to reduce the proportion of students permanently excluded from school. Students in Year 8 involved in the successful collaborative literacy project with Middlesbrough football club, spoke convincingly on the positive difference this has made to them. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. International and global links are developing effectively. However, opportunities to understand the more diverse communities across Britain are less well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

A small proportion of parents responded to the inspection questionnaire. They were supportive of the school, particularly in terms of how well the school keeps their children safe, the quality of teaching, actions to promote students' opportunities after school and

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the extent to which their views and concerns are taken into account. Four questionnaires had additional comments that were positive about the school and eight with more negative comments. These included concerns about the changes to the curriculum in English and mathematics, but given the underperformance in these subjects, this has been necessary. A couple had concerns about behaviour and bullying. Students who spoke to inspectors indicated bullying was rare, and mainly in the form of pushing or shoving. They were adamant that any issues would be dealt with quickly. Behaviour management has been a strong focus of the school and behaviour is generally good in classes and around the school, although the number of days students lose to fixed period exclusion has limited this to be judged satisfactory overall. The headteacher was made aware of individual comments and concerns where it would not jeopardise the confidentiality of those responding, and is taking action to tackle those issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ormesby 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 815 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	29	37	59	7	11	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	15	24	41	65	7	11	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	43	27	43	8	13	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	37	37	59	1	2	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	22	35	35	56	3	5	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	40	28	44	8	13	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	27	36	57	7	11	1	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)	26	41	29	46	5	8	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	35	30	48	6	10	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	35	31	49	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	30	36	57	5	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	19	30	33	52	8	13	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	33	34	54	5	8	1	2

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.



11 February 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Ormesby School, Middlesbrough, TS3 0RG

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you who took time to talk to us about the school and your work. We were glad to hear that you are proud of your school and that you feel safe and there is always someone there to help in times of need. Although a couple of parents believe behaviour is an issue in school, we saw you behaving well in classes and as you moved around the narrow corridors and outside. However, because of the number of students who are out of lessons due to temporary exclusion, we have judged behaviour to be satisfactory overall. We found the care, guidance and support provided to you is good as is your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We were impressed with the way you all get along, including those of you who have physical difficulties. The curriculum is good, particularly at Key Stage 4 and you make a good contribution to the school and local community through your many roles and responsibilities.

The senior leadership team are working hard to improve the school. However, there are some important weaknesses which have led us to judge the school as inadequate overall. For example, although improving, the standard of your work shown in examination results and that seen in lessons, including the progress you make, is not consistently good enough. The quality of teaching has improved, some is good and even outstanding, but it is not always good enough to make sure you all make the best possible progress in lessons. Additionally not all teachers are using the information they have about your learning to make sure that lessons match all your needs. The school is developing information systems to monitor the impact of its work, but these are not fully in place. Too many of you are absent; sometimes for long periods and this is having an impact on your progress. We have, therefore, given the school a notice to improve. Inspectors will visit the school after a few months to see how well senior managers are tackling these issues.

Once again, many thanks for your contribution to the inspection and on behalf of the team, I wish you every success as you move through school and into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Margaret Farrow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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