

Worden Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119741
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339521
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Gill Jones 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	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms C Harrison
Headteacher	Mrs S Rignall
Date of previous school inspection	6 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited the lessons of 24 teachers, and held meetings with governors, the local authority School Improvement Partner, partnership organisations, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised documentation including the school improvement plan, governors' minutes, students' progress data, targets and exercise books. Inspectors also evaluated information from 98 student, 35 staff and 67 parental questionnaires.

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

- students' achievement at both key stages to determine whether teaching and the curriculum sufficiently meets their needs
- staff expectations and whether the school sets challenging targets
- how effectively the leadership monitors and evaluates the impact of its actions on the outcomes for students
- the impact of the specialist status on the outcomes for students.

Information about the school

Worden is a small comprehensive school with specialist status for sport and information and communication technology. It is situated in an area which experiences some economic and social disadvantage. The majority of students live within walking distance of the school. The number of students eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The majority of students are of White British heritage, a very small minority are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disability and with a statement of special educational needs is higher than found nationally.

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

3

Main findings

Worden provides a satisfactory quality of education. The headteacher sets high expectations and ensures that the health, safety and well-being of students are a high priority. Since the last inspection, all aspects of the school's work have improved. The standards reached at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 are rising gradually, though remain below the national average. Students' progress is satisfactory. Behaviour is good and students achieve higher standards in physical education (PE) and vocational studies than is found nationally. Students report that they enjoy school and this is demonstrated by improvements in their attendance, which is now above average. Most parents are satisfied with their child's progress at Worden. They appreciate the good quality of pastoral care. This was evident during the inspection, particularly towards those students in wheelchairs.

Students join the school with a wide range of abilities, but standards on entry are below, and in some year groups well below, the national average. During their five years at Worden, students' achievement in most subjects is satisfactory. However, at the end of Year 11, the percentage of students who gain 5 GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is well below the national average. Standards attained by the students at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2009 were higher than in previous years and demonstrate good achievement. Students know how to lead healthy lifestyles and the majority are keen to take part in the wealth of sporting clubs and outdoor activities provided by the specialist sports faculty. Students work well with the local community and raise significant sums for local, national and international charities.

The quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum are satisfactory. Inspectors observed lessons which ranged from outstanding to inadequate. The senior leadership team hold an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses within the different faculties. However, self-evaluation is not consistently rigorous enough, nor are staff held sufficiently to account to secure rapid improvement in outcomes for all students. The school sets challenging targets for students in Years 10 and 11. However, expectations for students at the start of Key Stage 3 are not consistently high enough. Governance is satisfactory. Governors and staff are committed to raising standards and the school benefits from the good support of the local authority. Because of the steady improvement made since the last inspection in all aspects of its work, the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to sustain continued improvement and provides satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Increase the number of students attaining 5 GCSE A* to C including English and mathematics, by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching
 - setting challenging targets for all students, particularly from Key Stage 2 to 3 and from Key Stage 2 to 4 in English, mathematics and science
 - making better use of assessment data to raise staff expectations
 - matching work more accurately to student's abilities.
- Improve the rigour of school self-evaluation, by:
 - checking thoroughly that agreed actions are fully implemented
 - evaluating the impact of agreed actions against the outcomes achieved by students
 - linking students individual subject targets to whole school targets more accurately
 - strengthening the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning
 - holding staff accountable for the outcomes achieved by students.
- Strengthen leadership and management, by:
 - increasing the accountability of leaders and managers at all levels for the outcomes achieved by students
 - sharing the good practice which exists in the specialist faculties across all departments
 - evaluating the impact of leaders and managers at all levels against improvement in students' outcomes.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Students joining the school have achieved a range of standards in the national tests at age 11, but overall standards are below the national average. They make satisfactory progress and their achievement is satisfactory, overall. Since the last inspection, the percentage of students attaining 5 GCSE A* to G is now above the national average and the attainment of girls, in particular is improving. However, at age 16, most students reach standards that are generally below the national average. GCSE performance at A* to C in humanities, English literature, French and mathematics is weak. The school recognises the low attainment in these subjects and is working systematically to tackle the issues. Standards reached in cookery and information and communication technology (ICT) are above the national average and results for the new BTEC courses are positive. In Key Stage 3, the progress made by Year 9 students was good and they reached standards that were significantly higher than in previous years. If these

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students remain on course, school tracking data shows that standards are set to rise significantly in 2011.

In lessons, standards are generally below expected levels. Where teaching was better, students made good progress. This was notable in an outstanding PE theory lesson, where students were planning a programme to improve their performance in training. The students worked well together in groups to prepare 'a pitch' for their chosen method of training. This challenged the students to use both their social skills and knowledge and enabled them to make outstanding progress. Where teaching was weaker, for example, in a satisfactory science lesson, all students were doing the same work, despite a very wide range of ability and there was little evidence of challenge to ensure that the most-able students in particular achieved their potential. Many lessons comprised of students copying information from the interactive white board, or filling in worksheets and there was little opportunity for discussion or for an enquiry based approach to learning.

Students have a good knowledge of their targets and in strong faculties they are used well to enable the students to make good progress. However, targets set for students in the lower part of the school are inappropriate. For example, some students in Year 7 are set attainment targets in mathematics, English and science that are lower than the standards they attained in the national tests at the end of Year 6. This means that staff expectations are too low.

Students are polite and welcoming to visitors and happy to talk about their work. Some students from lower sets reported that where teaching is weak there is some misbehaviour, but generally they feel behaviour is good in and around the school. This was evident during the inspection. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. They appreciate being part of a small school where every individual is known well, but student's understanding of the wider world is narrow and opportunities are missed to develop this further in the curriculum, particularly in science and geography. Good opportunities exist for students to learn about economic well-being through the extended curriculum and ICT. However, because of consistently low attainment in the basic skills, their readiness for the world of work remains only satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	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	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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Most of the lessons observed were satisfactory or better. However, inspectors observed a very small proportion of lessons that were inadequate and a similar proportion that were outstanding. Teachers generally have good relationships with students and most students report that they know what is expected of them in lessons and they appear keen to learn. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, trust the students to work well together to complete tasks and set clear deadlines for what needs to be achieved. This enables the students to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own progress. In these lessons, teaching assistants are well managed to support students with additional learning needs. Where lessons were weaker, teachers gave little responsibility to students and often, these lessons were overly reliant on published schemes of work or worksheets. Dialogue between staff and students in these lessons was minimal and students say they are unwilling to admit whether or not they understand the task.

In the best lessons, assessment is used effectively to ensure that students are provided with sufficient challenge. However, because there are weaknesses in the target setting system overall, assessment is not used consistently well across all faculties. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, a task to extend students' vocabulary in order for them to gain a better grade in their GCSE, did not take account of what students already knew. This means that although the school recognises that some students need intervention work to enable them to gain better grades at GCSE, the work set is not designed well enough for them to make good progress.

Worden provides a satisfactory curriculum. Some aspects of the curriculum are good,

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such as the provision for sports and ICT. These faculties secure a high level of student support and are a key reason in improving attendance. For example, Year 9 boys were keen to take part in their basketball lesson rather than speak to inspectors and students are proud of their achievements. Recently, new partnerships have been secured to support Worden to extend its curriculum to include a greater focus on BTEC courses. However, the size of the school limits the range of options available for students.

Partnership work is used well to support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in particular those who have behavioural difficulties. Other partnerships are developing well, but the impact on students' achievement is satisfactory. Students who were bullied at other schools say they feel safe at Worden and they are confident to share any concerns with staff. Students say they are given good guidance to secure their next steps in either education, training or work and the school provides a good range of work placements to support students in making career choices.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership recognises that although the school has been very successful in improving some aspects of its work, such as attendance and the specialist subjects, it has been slow in improving the general standards reached by students in Year 11. Currently, the best practice in the school is not shared widely enough. The school continues to face staffing difficulties, which have absorbed much of the time of senior leaders and managers and slowed progress overall since the last inspection.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team are committed to raising standards and driving school improvement. The school has good quality plans for improvement. However, senior staff do not always monitor agreed actions carefully enough. For example, although the school sets individual targets for all students, it has not checked thoroughly how these translate at individual student level in exercise books or through faculty assessment data. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is overly positive, which means that some weaker aspects of teaching and learning are not tackled quickly enough.

Middle leadership is developing well in some faculties and appropriate training is provided for staff. However, middle leadership is weakened because staff are not sufficiently involved in target setting, monitoring and holding staff to account. As a result, equality of opportunity for students remains satisfactory.

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Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive but have not fully interrogated the reasons why the school continues to face some intractable difficulties in staffing, which are slowing the rate of students' progress overall. The school does not always evaluate the impact of its work closely enough to ensure that it pinpoints exactly how to make more rapid improvement. Worden is a cohesive community that understands and contributes to the local community particularly well. Good community links are a strength and are also being developed nationally and internationally. Arrangements to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of students are of good quality and meet the current statutory requirements well.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A relatively small number of responses from parents and carers were received. The majority of parents are supportive of the school. Where parents wrote additional comments, positive and negative views were equally balanced. Some comments were received about bullying and the way the school handles discipline, but these were contradicted by comments such as 'the school works closely with parents and act on any concerns. They also celebrate students' success building confidence'. Where inspectors agree with parents, this appears in the main body of the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

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

The inspection team received 67 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 379 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	21	46	69	5	7	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	20	30	44	66	1	1	2	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	25	48	72	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	25	43	64	5	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	12	18	50	75	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	13	48	72	6	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	19	50	75	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	22	47	70	3	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	21	50	75	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	25	41	61	7	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	19	44	66	3	4	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	17	25	42	63	6	9	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	27	44	66	2	3	1	1

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.



22 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Worden Sports College, Leyland, PR25 1QX

Recently, I visited your school with two other inspectors to carry out an inspection. Thank you for talking to us and sharing your views, particularly to those who had to miss some of their PE lesson! We found what you said interesting and thought provoking. This letter is to explain our inspection findings.

We judged that your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. Some things have improved since it was last inspected, but there is still some way to go to ensure that you all reach the standards you are capable of achieving. Some aspects of the school's work are good. In particular, the specialist faculties and the pastoral care provided. However, some other faculties need further improvement.

We judged your behaviour to be good and we had several discussions about this because some of you reported that it is not managed effectively by all staff. However, during the inspection, we saw good behaviour and could see that you wanted your school to do well. You can help your school achieve this by always giving 100% effort to all that you do.

To improve the school further we have asked staff to:

- raise the standards you reach in English and mathematics
- improve how the school checks the impact of its plans and actions
- strengthen leadership and management.

With my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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