

# Easingwold School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121664
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339993
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Georgiana Sale

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1304
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	160
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Nicholas Nightingale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carey Chidwick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	York Road Easingwold York YO61 3EF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 50 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at policy documents, student files, governing body minutes, the school's records of lesson observations, data analysis and students' work. Inspectors looked at 110 parents' questionnaires as well as questionnaires from students and staff.

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

- the rates of progress and achievement at all key stages
- the use of tracking and assessment data to plan lessons
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in driving improvement.

## Information about the school

This large school serves the town of Easingwold and the surrounding rural area, with over a quarter of its students coming from York. Most students are White British with a few from minority ethnic groups. Almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well below average. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds but, overall, their social circumstances are well above average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the number of students with statements of special educational need are both below average. The school holds the International School Award, Investors in People award, Fair Trade status, the Connexions Quality Standard and the Economics, Business and Enterprise Quality Mark. It is an International Baccalaureate World School and holds the Special Educational Needs Quality Mark. The school is a specialist language college.

**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

Easingwold is a satisfactory school with some good and outstanding elements.

The school is inclusive and has a strong sense of community. The school's strong links with other agencies and its involvement in projects, often through the language college status, give students a very good introduction to the global community. Students have an excellent level of attendance and they speak with warmth and pride of the enjoyment they get from coming to school. They feel safe and well supported. The language specialism pervades the whole school, enhancing students' personal and cultural development and offering courses where teaching and learning are of a good standard. Nearly all students learn at least one foreign language.

Students' achievement is satisfactory overall both in the main school and in the sixth form. They enter with above average standards and make satisfactory progress during their time in the school to reach above average standards by the end of Year 11. The results for 2009 show a rise in standards, especially in science and modern languages. The progress made by all students, including those with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities, is satisfactory. Targets for the school's specialist subjects have been met and often exceeded. The school's tracking system now shows that students in Key Stage 4 are making better progress and are on course to meet challenging targets. A large majority of Year 11 students have already secured an A\* to C grade in English literature following early entry to GCSE examinations; and modular test results from science are similarly encouraging. The curriculum has been adapted well to meet students' needs. A growing range of vocational courses, for example environment and land-based studies, are available at Key Stage 4. A high number of students from all year groups participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

While teaching is satisfactory overall, too much teaching was seen which was not meeting the needs of all the students consistently. Although there are areas of good practice, teachers are not using assessment information consistently to guide lesson planning and are not providing enough challenge for all their students.

The headteacher and senior staff are largely accurate in their self-evaluation. They know where the strengths and weaknesses are in the school and are beginning to set a clear direction for improvement. However, the tracking and evaluation of students' progress and appropriate intervention by leaders have not been quick enough to stop underachievement in the past. Governors give support to the school, although their knowledge of the areas for improvement is limited and, occasionally, they do not challenge senior leaders effectively enough. School leaders work well in partnership with a wide range of other agencies both to give support and care to the students and to

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offer courses that are suited to the students' needs and interests. Evidence of a committed senior team, some key appointments to middle leadership roles, and the positive impact on achievement at Key Stage 4 in 2009 demonstrate a satisfactory and growing capacity to improve.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the level of attainment and rates of progress for all students by:
  - using prior attainment data to plan lessons more effectively so that the needs of all students are met and the level of challenge is increased for all students
  - ensuring that students know their targets and that feedback from teachers informs students precisely how they can improve their work
- -using challenging targets and measuring progress towards these targets.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels are held to account by:
  - evaluating assessment data rigorously in order to intervene more quickly and effectively when there is evidence of student underachievement
  - monitoring the effectiveness of the intervention.
- Increase the level of challenge from the governing body through:
  - greater involvement in the formulation and monitoring of the school improvement plan and in self-evaluation
  - ensuring more rigorous accountability of leaders at all levels.

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

Students enter the school with above average standards and by the time they leave in Year 11, standards continue to be above average. Students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

In the most successful lessons, students have positive attitudes to learning and make good progress. However, observations during the inspection showed that opportunities are often missed to challenge students and provide them with stimulating tasks that would enable them to become independent and inquisitive learners. This means that many students do not make good progress or achieve their full potential.

Students generally get on well with each other and show consideration for others. They show a good level of self-discipline in and around the school and generally behave in a sensible and mature manner. They take an active role in being part of, and building their strong school community. They make a very positive contribution to their local community by being part of local sports clubs and taking part in local drama productions. The student council knows its voice is heard and valued. It has successfully tackled important matters including changes to the school day.

Students know how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They make healthy food choices and take plenty of exercise. Students say they feel safe and secure in school. Students say that on the rare occasions that bullying happens, 'we know who to tell and that they will deal

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with it'.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, supported by the opportunities offered through language school status; for example trips to China are organised. Most students gain a foreign language qualification, good standards in literacy and numeracy and timely careers advice, which, together with a growing range of vocational courses and enterprise activities, provide a useful foundation in preparing students for their adult life.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the majority of lessons, teachers display good subject knowledge. There are good working relationships between students and teachers, which help to promote positive attitudes to learning. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of students and ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge and generate enthusiasm amongst students. Students concentrate well and work effectively in groups or independently. In these lessons, high quality, regular, spoken and written feedback to the students gives clear guidance on what they can do

<sup>1</sup> 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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to improve and progress at a faster pace.

Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, guidance from teachers about what to do to improve, and information about the ability of students, are not always used to plan the lesson effectively. This results in work that is not always matched to students' needs. Occasionally, the misbehaviour of a small minority of students disrupts the learning of others.

The school provides a good and increasingly diverse curriculum that meets the needs and interests of students. Most students take a modern language at Key Stage 4 and all students are able to study three separate sciences as well as statistics and astronomy. There is a growing range of relevant vocational courses in Key Stage 4; for example, agriculture is delivered in partnership with a local college. Both parents and students appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular provision and students say that there is, 'something for everyone'.

A high level of commitment from the staff and timely use of external support partners helps to ensure good care and pastoral support for the students. Arrangements to ensure that students feel safe are good. Care and support are also good for looked after students, more vulnerable students and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Support for students with behavioural difficulties is good and has resulted in very low levels of exclusion. The support for students with potential attendance issues is robust and as a result, the school has excellent levels of attendance.

Arrangements for students to transfer into the school, into the sixth form and beyond are good, ensuring continuity in their education. Students say that they quickly 'felt at home' in the school and that they thought they received good advice about future courses both in Key Stage 4 and beyond.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. The impact of the leadership can be seen in the excellent levels of attendance of the students, the recent improvements in standards, the above average levels of attainment and in the good care provided. The headteacher has re-established a clear direction for the school following two years of disappointing examination results. This includes a sharper focus on students' achievement and progress. There is a common sense of purpose amongst the senior and middle leaders. The school improvement plan reflects the school's self-evaluation

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but is not focused enough on what the school needs to do to improve the quality of teaching and learning or the rates of progress for the vast majority of students.

Targets set by the school in the past have not been adequately challenging. More rigorous systems have now been introduced, designed to improve the quality and accuracy of information about students' progress. Subject leaders are beginning to be more accountable for their areas of responsibility. However, many of the structures and changes are in their infancy, although early signs of their impact are evident in the recent rise in examination results at Key Stage 4. Governors are very supportive of the school but their involvement in the process of school self-evaluation and their monitoring of the school improvement plan have been limited.

The school promotes community cohesion well. The headteacher has been successful in developing a cohesive school community and working in partnerships to make better provision for the students. The school generally has good relationships with parents; emails and questionnaires as well as a parents' council make sure there is a good dialogue between parents and school. Other partnerships are used well to offer a broader curriculum, or to give an individualised care package through outside agencies. Students and parents say they feel that Easingwold is a welcoming and inclusive school where anyone can fit in and take part in a range of opportunities both within the school day and beyond. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively. It provides satisfactory value for money. Arrangements for health and safety and the safeguarding of students are in line with current government requirements and are reviewed regularly.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## Sixth form

The sixth form provides a satisfactory education. Standards on entry to the sixth form are broadly average when compared to other sixth forms. By the time students leave at the end of Year 13, standards are average. Recent changes in the leadership of the sixth form have resulted in more accurate self-evaluation. Effective action has addressed weaknesses and inspection evidence confirms the school's judgement that the quality of teaching and learning, and current progress, are improving and are now good. The most recent examination results and the school's tracking of students' progress show that standards are rising. For example, the proportion of students attaining the highest grades at A level has risen by 5% in the last two years. Care and support are good, leading to very good retention rates for the sixth form and the vast majority of students progressing onto higher education. They are given clear guidance so that they take appropriate courses linked to their capabilities and are given good advice on how to improve the quality of their work. The sixth form development programme is effective and allows the students to become confident and mature young adults.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents are happy with the school and feel it is preparing their child well for their future life. Most parents find the school helpful and supportive of their child's needs and speak positively of the pastoral care of the school. The inspection findings agree with this. The majority express the view that they are satisfied with their child's progress and feel well informed about how well they are doing at school. Some parents have some concerns about the lack of challenge in the school. This is confirmed by the inspection findings. Some parents also have concerns about the behaviour of the students on the school buses, although this was not observed as part of the inspection. A very small minority of parents think that communication with them could be improved.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Easingwold 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1304 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	153	50	142	47	7	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	129	42	166	55	5	2	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	92	30	166	55	30	10	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	99	33	169	56	19	6	6	2
The teaching is good at this school	111	37	166	55	16	5	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	103	34	151	50	34	11	6	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	89	29	181	60	23	8	5	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)	97	33	166	56	17	6	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	88	29	183	60	17	6	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	89	29	176	58	20	7	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	92	31	166	55	16	5	7	2
The school is led and managed effectively	92	31	180	60	15	5	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	126	42	151	50	13	4	4	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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



Inspection of Easingwold School, York. YO61 3EF

As you are aware, four colleagues and I recently spent two days inspecting your school, and I am writing to let you know the judgements we have made.

The inspection found that yours is a satisfactory school with some good and outstanding features. This year, nearly all students left with five GCSE passes and Year 11 students achieved above national standards in nearly all subjects. In 2009, the results improved, especially in science and modern languages.

You told us how much you enjoy the range of sporting and other activities. Your teachers and other staff give you good support and you told us that you always feel there is someone you can talk to about any problem. The vast majority of you are well behaved in classes and around school, and your attendance is very good.

The sixth-form students set a good example for younger ones. Most of you work hard in lessons and it is also good to see that you involve yourselves in a wide range of activities that help the school and the community.

The headteacher and all the staff work really hard to make the school a better place to be and know where further improvements can be made. To help with this we have asked them to:

- make sure teachers plan their lessons more effectively and set you more demanding work so that you can make better progress
- ensure that all leaders are involved in evaluating your progress and act quickly to support you when you need help
- ensure governors challenge the school more effectively in order to raise standards.

You need to make sure that you keep up your excellent levels of attendance and rise to the challenge when your teachers give you harder work to do. Thank you again for helping us with the inspection of your school. We enjoyed spending the two days with you and wish you every success in the future.

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