



# Rawthorpe High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107756  
**LEA** Kirklees  
**Inspection number** 282940  
**Inspection dates** 3 November 2005 to 4 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Andrew Bennett HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Nether Hall Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Huddersfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		West Yorkshire HD5 9PG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 221892
<b>Number on roll</b>	391	<b>Fax number</b>	01484 221894
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr P Rock
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 May 2002	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Young

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 3 November 2005 - 4 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 282940
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## Introduction

Rawthorpe High School was previously inspected in March 2003 by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI). The inspection found that the school had made too little progress in addressing the serious weaknesses identified through an inspection in May 2002 and that it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education for its pupils and required special measures. The school was subsequently monitored on a regular basis by HMI, and was re-inspected in November 2005 by a team of two HMI and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Rawthorpe High School is situated in a compact, densely populated area of Huddersfield that has a strong local identity. Most of the pupils live nearby on two large housing estates. Some households experience social and economic deprivation and the area has received regeneration funding in recent years. One third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Two thirds of the pupils are from white British families and the rest cover a wide mix of ethnic groups. Although about one in six of the pupils are believed to have home languages other than English, very few are in the early stages of learning English. The pupils enter Rawthorpe High School having achieved results at primary school that are much lower than average overall. More than a third of the pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is well above the national figure. Full service extended school provision is available on the site, under the direction of a community manager.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2005 following two terms during which the headteacher and deputy headteacher from another local school were placed in Rawthorpe High School by the local authority as executive headteacher and acting headteacher respectively. The school has been awarded the silver Artsmark and is currently seeking the gold award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Nevertheless, in accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI 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 the standards attained by the pupils and the progress they make throughout the school.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate. The pupils' results in national tests and GCSE examinations have shown little change over the past three years. They are very low compared with all schools nationally. Most pupils make too little progress during their time in school. The school has not given adequate value for money because the pupils do not achieve enough, given the funding that has been available. However, financial management and budgetary control is now satisfactory. Most pupils behave well and enjoy their lessons. This is one reason why the rate of attendance has increased so much over the past eighteen months. The quality of teaching and learning has improved steadily since the last inspection, largely because planning is more consistent and teachers use a broader range of methods to interest the pupils. More demanding performance targets are being set but not enough is yet expected of all pupils, especially those with the potential to achieve at high levels. The new headteacher has built rapidly on improvements that started before her appointment. She has quickly gained the loyalty and support of the school community. Staff and pupils are keen to confirm that she has created a new sense of direction and aspiration.

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. There is still work to be done on establishing systems that show managers where the school is doing well and where it could do better. Some staff have not had sufficient training to help them play a full part in improving the school. Inspectors agree with the headteacher that the school has the capacity to improve but that standards are still too low. This is because there has not been time for the impact of recent improvements in teaching and learning to be reflected in test and examination results. The quality of the pupils' work over the last few months shows that standards are beginning to rise. Many pupils are beginning to make better progress than before.

### What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards and improve achievement
- increase the proportion of lessons that are good or outstanding
- develop self-review procedures to check the quality of the school's work and strengthen its effectiveness where necessary

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

In 2004, standards in national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 were very low when compared to all schools nationally. Standards in GCSE examinations were also very low. The results achieved in summer 2005 showed no significant improvement. In the GCSE examinations, only about one pupil in five achieved five or more higher grade passes. In both 2004 and 2005, the school failed to meet its test and examination targets by a considerable margin.

Pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment and leave having achieved standards that are still well below average. Performance data for 2004 shows that most pupils do not make anything like the progress they should during their time in school. Test and examination results for 2005 indicate a continuing trend. The school is fully aware of a stubborn pattern of underachievement and worryingly low standards. The new leadership team has implemented an imaginative range of measures to tackle this persistent problem. For example, many Year 11 pupils will soon attend a residential course to improve their learning skills and raise their motivation to succeed. Other pupils are having their curriculum amended to give them a better chance of success. It will take time for these initiatives to impact on results, but they provide grounds for confidence in the school's capacity to raise standards and levels of achievement and meet its new targets.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with other pupils in the school. There is no significant difference in levels of achievement between different groups of pupils, whether by gender or ethnic group. The school does not systematically identify pupils who are gifted or talented. In many lessons, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to ensure they achieve their potential.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' attendance has increased notably from well below 90% two years ago to a level that is now above the national average. Their attitudes to school are good, and many have a mature and genuine desire to learn. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, although some pupils are over-exuberant when teachers are not about. All the pupils interviewed by inspectors said that they felt safe and the school's procedures show that their trust is well founded. Many pupils take their responsibilities seriously. For example, the school council has actively focused school leaders on a number of significant issues in recent months. Pupils recognise that the school is improving. As one Year 11 pupil commented to inspectors, 'Two years ago, I could have given you a list as long as my arm of improvements needed in the school. Today, I can't think of a single thing.'

The school provides well for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Harmonious relationships between different ethnic groups are a significant feature. The pupils' personal development is enhanced through good opportunities to become involved with the wider community, for example through raising funds for victims of

the recent earthquake in Kashmir. Work experience for all pupils helps them prepare for their future economic well-being. A wide range of extra curricular activities and clubs is enjoyed by large numbers of pupils. Other activities such as 'drug day' and 'health day' help them develop an understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably since the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. Better teaching has not had time to improve results in national tests and examinations but good and improving progress is evident in the pupils' recent work. Senior managers know where the best teaching is to be found and where further support is needed. The school is aware of variations in the quality of teaching and is taking incisive steps to improve consistency of practice. Highly effective teachers work with colleagues to ensure that good practice develops more widely. There is a positive culture of self-development and support in the school that encourages staff to identify specific training needs. They are highly appreciative of the training they receive, particularly the opportunities to work with colleagues from other departments. Teachers feel valued and are keen to improve their skills.

The best teaching is characterised by high expectations for all learners and consistency in applying school routines and procedures. Pupils are given opportunities to plan and organise their own learning and work in a variety of groupings. The pupils enjoy taking an active part in lessons. Teaching is closely matched to the needs of individual pupils. These features contribute to effective learning and help the pupils to make rapid progress.

When teaching fails to meet their needs and interests and the work lacks challenge, the pupils do not learn well enough. Some teachers do not mark the pupils' work in sufficient detail. This means that plans for future lessons do not always meet the pupils' individual needs. Higher attaining pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not always make the progress they should. The progress they do make by is not always adequately recorded. Nevertheless, the newly appointed achievement managers understand the need to improve the quality of learning throughout the school. They are having a positive impact on raising the pupils' aspirations and the teachers' expectations.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory and meets adequately the needs of all the pupils. Provision in the performing arts is a strength of the school that has been recognised by a national award. Booster classes are provided for low attaining pupils to increase their confidence in national tests. Extra revision classes to prepare for GCSE examinations are increasingly popular with the pupils. Basic skills in literacy are

reinforced consistently across the curriculum in many classes. Most teachers make a conscious effort to develop the pupils' knowledge of specialist vocabulary and encourage them to develop their confidence in speaking. In some lessons, the pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills of writing at length. Within the constraints of its size, the school intends to develop more individualised learning programmes for older pupils, for example by drawing on joint initiatives brokered by the local authority. Pupils appreciate changes that have increased the interest and relevance of the curriculum, such as the introduction of media studies in Key Stage 4.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care provided by the school is good. Child protection procedures are effective. Fire drills are logged and good systems are in place to record and report accidents. Where these raise questions about the pupils' safety, they are investigated immediately. The school provides good support to vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and / or disabilities through the innovative use of the full service extended school facility. Pupils value the advice and help they receive from teachers and mentors. The number of exclusions is falling. The reduction in incidents of ill-discipline in classrooms and around the school shows how much the pupils' behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and are quickly involved if issues to do with attendance, detention or fixed term exclusion ever arise.

Systems for the pastoral support and guidance of pupils are linked to records of their academic progress. This means that the school sees care in the broad context of enabling all pupils to reach their potential as learners, as well as ensuring their personal well-being. Mentors have been given a significant role to play in raising attainment by working in close partnership with achievement managers. Older pupils receive good guidance when choosing options and making choices about further education or careers. Extensive and active contacts with the local community, further education establishments and businesses enhance the effectiveness of this provision.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher leads the school very well. Her clear vision for improvement is communicated effectively and contributes significantly to the tangible sense of optimism in the school community. Other senior leaders share the headteacher's commitment and have the capacity to develop as an effective team now that roles and responsibilities have been clarified to take account of individual strengths and interests. Because the headteacher has only recently taken up her appointment, a formal self-evaluation has not been completed. However, policy statements and development plans show that she has formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a sure sense of how best to prioritise and initiate actions. The quality of middle leadership

and management is variable. A training programme to develop the skills of departmental planning and monitoring has begun. It has been enthusiastically received and other staff are eagerly awaiting their chance to take part. The former acting headteacher will continue in post as associate headteacher during this school year and her knowledge and understanding of the school is an asset to the senior leadership team. The post has been generously funded by the local authority. Since acting decisively to improve the quality of leadership and management in the school, the local authority has responded effectively to specific requests for support in remedying identified weaknesses.

Delegation in respect of all financial and staffing matters was withdrawn from the governing body in April 2005. Nevertheless, governors have continued to meet regularly to consider general policy issues. They effectively managed the process of appointing a new headteacher. A productive working relationship has been established between the chair of governors and the headteacher. Under their guidance, governors are now streamlining the committee structure. The local authority anticipates that full delegated powers will be returned in the near future.

The school budget has been under severe pressure, given falling pupil numbers and some shortcomings in ensuring effective use of additional funding sources in recent years. However, the executive leadership and the local authority agreed a balanced budget for the current financial year. Control measures and monitoring have been implemented and a small contingency surplus has been maintained. Financial management and budgetary control is now effective.

In the few questionnaires that were returned, most parents expressed positive views about the work of the school. Some felt that behaviour could be better, but inspectors believe this is an aspect of the school that has improved significantly and is now mostly good.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, a group of inspectors visited your school recently. I would like to thank you all for the kindness and courtesy you showed during our visit. Many of you were keen to tell us about your work, about school life in general, and to help us find our way around the building! On the whole, you seem to be happy at Rawthorpe High School and you think that the school is getting better. We agree with you.

Some of you will know that I have been visiting your school each term for almost two years to see how it is improving. I am really pleased that so many aspects of the school are much better than they were. Your new headteacher is certain that the school can improve still further and we are confident that you can help her in that. Your behaviour in classrooms and around the school is usually good but the corridors are sometimes too noisy between lessons. Most of you now attend school regularly, and you enjoy lessons, especially when the teachers give you the chance to do practical activities or work together in groups. You know that you are well cared-for in the school and the teachers have some interesting new ideas about how to help you get the very best qualifications that you can. You are being asked to work harder than before in many lessons and you are being told more clearly how to improve your work. This may seem hard at times, but it will help you make the most of your opportunities at Rawthorpe High School.

Of course, there are still some improvements that need to be made. Test and examination results are not good enough, and you have an important part to play in changing this. Some lessons are not as exciting as they could be and the way your work is marked varies a lot between subjects. Now that inspectors will not be coming into your school quite so often, the teachers will have to make sure that they know when things are not going as well as they could and how to make them better.

We discovered this week that you are very loyal to your school and that you want it to do well. We wish you and Rawthorpe High School every success in the future.