

Queensbury School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107391
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336878
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Patrick Geraghty 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1230
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Judy Hooton
Headteacher	Mr Alan Worthington
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors spent the majority of their time visiting 43 lessons which represents the observation of 60% of available teaching staff. They held meetings with staff, groups of students, the School Improvement Partner, external support partners, and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB). Documentation was scrutinised including: information related to the tracking of the academic and personal progress of students; detailed analysis of students' attainment and progress; school development planning; school and subject self-evaluation; records of recent classroom monitoring; minutes from meetings of the IEB; and evidence to demonstrate how the school supports students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Inspectors also examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure that it meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 161 parental questionnaires were scrutinised along with questionnaires returned by a representative sample of staff and students.

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

- Whether strategies to improve student attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4 have been effective.
- If the behaviour of a significant minority of students has improved since the last inspection so all can fully engage in learning.
- If students are well prepared for life in a multicultural society.
- If leaders and managers, at all levels, have the necessary capacity to improve the outcomes for students more rapidly.

Information about the school

Queensbury School is an above-average-sized secondary school situated in Queensbury, Bradford. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, although the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average but increasing. About 9% of students are of minority ethnic background, although this increases to nearly 14% in Years 7 and 8. The school has specialist mathematics and computing status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

This is now a satisfactory and improving school. A recent legacy of underperformance is being successfully tackled. The introduction of effective tracking and monitoring systems to identify students' progress and successful strategies to tackle the poor behaviour of a significant minority of students has refocused the school. Students are benefiting from the closer monitoring that ensures they make better progress. One Year 11 student expressed the change succinctly as, 'This was a gloomy place. I hated coming to school. Now behaviour has completely changed and I can learn and I enjoy it'. Data are used effectively and challenging targets are now set. Attainment has risen because of a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of students' work examined by inspectors was at least satisfactory. Most recent tests, assessments and tracking of progress of current Year 10 and 11 students indicate a further acceleration in improvement. Attainment in the sixth form is average. The school recognises the need to further raise standards at Key Stage 4 to both equal and surpass national averages in key indicators.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory; however, this represents considerable progress since the last inspection. While there is much good teaching, there remains too much which is satisfactory. No inadequate teaching was observed. Students, because of their better behaviour and ability to work in harmony together, enjoy school. Behaviour in lessons and around the site is good and often very good. Attendance is average, which represents significant improvement over a two-year period. The curriculum increasingly matches students' needs. Care, guidance and support are good with a growing focus on those most vulnerable and at risk of not achieving to their potential. However, the school also recognises the need to engage parents more fully in their child's learning and in understanding the work of the school.

There is effective leadership by the headteacher and his senior team. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and the school is aware of where further improvements need to be made. Equality of opportunities for all are promoted and the school has been particularly successful in better preparing students for life in a multicultural society. Members of the IEB have successfully focused on monitoring progress set against challenging targets. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The school's capacity to improve is good because of the extensive journey it has made since the last inspection in transforming key areas of provision from inadequate to satisfactory with continuing improvement trends. Robust data analysis and evaluation together with well-focused tracking and monitoring systems are embedded within the school culture. Management

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now recognise the school's developing strengths and prevailing weaknesses but are relentlessly committed to the pursuit of further improvement and ambitious in their vision for the future. They have also been adroit in using external partners to support the improvement agenda. One Year 10 student crisply summed up the momentum, 'This school is on the move'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise attainment at Key Stage 4 so that outcomes for five GCSE at A* to C, including English and mathematics, exceed the national average by 2012 through:
 - improving further the attainment of boys
 - improving the attainment and progress made by students known to be eligible for free school meals so that they match the school average.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching and learning by:
 - promoting a greater focus on independent and group learning skills
 - ensuring that questioning is used effectively to challenge individual students according to their needs
 - the consistent and effective use of data in lesson planning.
- Engage parents and carers more as active participants in their children's learning.
- 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**

When students join the school in Year 7, their attainment is broadly average.

The current quality of work in students' books and engagement in lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory and in some cases good. Evidence from school assessment data, external scrutiny of assessments, lesson observations and the examination of students' work indicates that attainment is average and progress at Key Stage 3 is currently satisfactory. The school has maintained a gradual improvement in Key Stage 4 examination results over a three-year period. From 2007 to 2010, the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE at A* to C grades increased by 15%. The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics over a similar period, increased by 12%. Current Year 10 and 11 tracking, assessment and examination evidence indicates a continuation and acceleration of improved attainment and progress. The school acknowledges the need to raise the proportion of students gaining five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics more rapidly. Boys currently underperform as do students known to be eligible for free school meals, with the latter lagging significantly below the school average in Key Stage 4 results. Students identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers.

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Students take an increasing pride in their school. Behaviour has improved and is now good and is no longer a barrier to learning. Where incidents of bullying occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively. The vast majority of students are enthusiastic about coming to school and feel safe there. Inspection evidence indicated a harmonious community where different religious and ethnic groups respect each other and value learning. There is satisfactory extra-curricular provision for sports and cultural activities but the school acknowledges that this could be improved. Students have a satisfactory awareness of the importance of a healthy diet; however, a significant minority thought the school's provision in this area could be better. Students make a satisfactory contribution to the local and wider communities. Progression to further education and work-based learning is improving. Students' preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory. Highly effective attendance strategies have resulted in average attendance which continues to improve. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

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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Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors judged 58% of lessons observed as good or better with no inadequate lessons seen. This accurately reflected the school's own judgements and represents an improving trend. While there is a significant amount of teaching that is good, there remains too much that is satisfactory. In the best lessons time is well used and planning is good. Strong relationships reflect a calm and ordered learning environment. These lessons were characterised by enthusiasm, a good pace, student engagement, challenge and high expectations. Group and pair work were effectively organised. In lessons students work independently and in groups and take responsibility for their own learning. Questioning was focused and encouraged students to articulate their ideas. There was good use of technology to support learning. Marking is regular and clearly indicates to students where they are and how best to improve their work. In the satisfactory lessons the pace was slow and there was too much teacher talk. Students had few opportunities to explain or reflect upon their learning. Group work was limited and when used was not organised sufficiently well to encourage learning and the exploration of ideas and knowledge. Questioning was not used to challenge and develop students' participation. The use of data to inform lesson planning was variable.

The curriculum provides for a broad range of experience and meets statutory requirements. Provision for different groups is satisfactory overall with good provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and students who speak English as an additional language. At Key Stage 4, the school provides a broad range of academic and vocational courses further strengthened with the introduction of BTEC courses. Productive links have been established with the army, the local business community, local schools, colleges of further education and employers that have provided wider curriculum and progression opportunities. Personal, social and health education is satisfactory with a number of strong aspects particularly developed through the involvement of external agencies. The specialisms are making an increasingly effective contribution to curriculum development.

Care, support and guidance are good. Effective liaison with primary schools promotes a good transition experience for students. Effective monitoring of behaviour and attendance has had a significant impact on improving outcomes and the development of a harmonious school environment. Good work with external agencies ensures that specialist support is available for individuals. Support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good with particularly successful intervention strategies provided within the active learning centre. There is good support for students at risk of disaffection or exclusion. Exclusion rates as a result have declined significantly with no permanent exclusions and a reduction of 54% of time lost through exclusions. The mentoring system is supportive and valued by students particularly those in Year 7. There is good and effective symmetry between pastoral and academic staff that has improved tracking, monitoring and intervention to promote better student progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	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 headteacher has established clear strategic objectives, which are now fully understood and embraced by staff. Senior leaders consistently communicate high expectations about securing improvement. Attainment has moved from inadequate to average and school evidence indicates that such improvement continues. The development of data analysis and evaluation to inform and target intervention strategies is effective at a senior level and has been embedded at a middle management level. However, not all teachers make sufficient use of data to inform lesson planning. The management of teaching has improved with greater professional development opportunities and the eradication of inadequate teaching. However, too much teaching remains satisfactory. Members of the IEB have a good understanding of the needs, strengths and weaknesses of the school and use their skills to the benefit of the school. They challenge the school leaders robustly and hold the school to account. While links with parents and carers have improved, there are a small minority who remain unhappy about communication with the school. The school acknowledges that more needs to be done to engage parents and carers as active participants in their children's learning. Links with external providers and agencies add to the students' learning and the good quality of care, support and guidance. Much effort has resulted in the effective promotion of equality of opportunity through support programmes, the curriculum and external support. Strong and successful action has been taken to reduce discrimination and to promote students' understanding of life in a multicultural society. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and are regularly reviewed. Much has been achieved to develop a strong sense of community cohesion within the school and in developing links to promote an understanding of the international community. However, the school acknowledges that it is at an early stage in developing a fuller understanding of its local communities and the context of its impact and potential impact on those communities. The management of resources are good and the school's value for money, set against outcomes, is satisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
	3

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
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	3

Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Results in 2010 at GCE A level were broadly in line with the national average and progress was good. However, attainment on AS courses is below the national average and progression from AS level to A level remains too low. Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory. Students receive good feedback on how to improve. Pastoral care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Students feel confident in their teachers and relationships are good. There is good provision and support for students on level 2 courses. The leadership of the sixth form is satisfactory. Managers demonstrate a developing understanding of the sixth form's strengths and weaknesses. Systems to analyse and evaluate student enrolment and progress at AS level are insufficiently developed. Enrichment activities are limited.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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

Views of parents and carers

An analysis of responses to the questionnaire indicates that the majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at school and that appropriate steps are taken to ensure that their children are well prepared for the future. However, a small minority expressed concerns about ineffective communication, inadequate help given to them to support their children's learning, the progress that their children are

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making, on behaviour and the quality of teaching. Inspectors noted these parental concerns and have asked the school to work more actively with parents and carers so as to more fully involve all of them in their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Queensbury 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 161 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1230 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	30	99	59	16	10	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	32	104	62	4	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	25	88	52	19	11	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	26	90	54	16	10	5	3
The teaching is good at this school	29	17	106	63	23	14	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	15	95	57	30	18	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	14	101	60	28	17	3	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)	31	18	99	59	16	10	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	23	105	63	14	8	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	27	87	52	19	11	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	17	93	55	24	14	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	44	26	99	59	10	6	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	29	92	55	14	8	7	4

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



24 September 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Queensbury School, Bradford, BD13 2AS

Thank you for the warm and friendly welcome that you gave my colleagues and me when we inspected your school this week. We would also like to commend you for your good behaviour, maturity and your commitment to making the school a pleasant place to work in. As you know your school has been in special measures for three years. We were delighted to take it out of that category and grade it as a satisfactory and improving school. You can take much credit for that improvement. We were impressed by how much you all enjoy school and the positive relationships you have developed with each other and with adults. We would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with us.

Our inspection found that yours is now a satisfactory school with some good aspects. You are now making better progress throughout your time at the school. Your GCSE results are improving. There is much good teaching in the school. In these lessons, you respond well to the teachers' high expectations. Your curriculum options are satisfactory. The teachers and support staff give you good care, guidance and support. In the words of one student, 'This school is on the move'.

The leaders in your school worked with us to decide on some ways in which your provision could be better. We decided that to achieve this, the school should:

- improve your results in GCSE examinations, particularly in English and mathematics, so that they match and exceed national averages
- improve the percentage of good teaching so that you all experience and benefit from the best and most challenging teaching
- involve your parents to a greater extent in understanding how you learn and can make progress in your studies.

You can help your school to improve further by ensuring everyone focuses on the pursuit of excellence for all of you and trying hard in your studies so that you can achieve your full potential in life. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Patrick Geraghty

Her Majesty's Inspector

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