

# Brigshaw High School and Language College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108090
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	337022
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Josephine Nowacki HMI

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>	1393
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr M Dove
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Cath Lennon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Brigshaw Lane Allerton Bywater Castleford WF10 2HR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 42 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of management documentation, external evaluation reports, pupils' books and 174 parental questionnaires. They also considered the results of questionnaires completed by the staff and a sample of pupils.

- the learning and progress of pupils, especially for groups such as looked after children and students in the sixth form
- progress in lessons, including that of sixth form students, and how well assessment informs teaching
- the impact of care, guidance and support on improving all outcomes for specific groups including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are looked after and other vulnerable groups.

## Information about the school

Brigshaw High School is a larger than average comprehensive school situated to the east of Leeds. The school draws from ten wards with the majority of pupils coming from average social and economic backgrounds. A small but significant number of pupils come from underprivileged backgrounds and there are a higher number of looked after children than is usually found. The school has specialist facilities for pupils with physical and learning difficulties. Brigshaw has specialist language status and holds several awards including Advanced Healthy School, Stephen Lawrence level 2, International School and the Artsmark Gold.

The school is run by an acting headteacher while the permanent headteacher is seconded to the local authority on a temporary basis.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

'School is good', is a comment one young pupil wrote on their inspection questionnaire. Inspectors wholeheartedly agree; this is a good school. Some aspects are outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school. They feel safe and very well cared for as a result of the outstanding level of care, support and guidance they receive. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are outstanding. The performance of the school has fluctuated since the last inspection, but swift actions taken by the senior leadership team to rectify weaknesses has put the school on a firm footing. The acting headteacher, supported very well by her leadership team and the staff, has a clear vision to improve the life chances for all pupils in the school. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are robust and ensure accountability at middle leader level. Senior leaders and the governors know their school well, both its strengths and what it needs to do to improve. Challenging targets, including those set for the school's specialism, are met and exceeded. Hence, capacity to improve is good.

Achievement is good. The quality of learning is good overall and pupils enjoy their lessons. Progress for pupils, which include those who are looked after, is good in the majority of lessons. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to that of their peers. No group of pupils underachieves. However, the school is aware that there is still a small amount of teaching which remains satisfactory and the rate of progress in these lessons is slower. In the main, this is because the use of assessment information to inform lesson activities is not yet fully embedded in all areas of the school. Attainment in GCSE English is consistently high. Raising attainment in mathematics is a top priority and the school is implementing a rigorous programme of improvement in this area. The effects of this can be seen in the rising results in 2009, and for the current cohort in Key Stage 4. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3, an area for improvement at the last inspection, has improved and is now good. Students' achievement in the sixth form, which dipped since the last inspection, is now satisfactory.

The school's specialist status makes a significant contribution to the curriculum and to the vast array of enrichment opportunities, trips and visits, which help to broaden pupils' horizons. The curriculum is good and offers an increasing number of pathways to enable all pupils, whatever their ability and interest, to achieve. The school works very closely with a range of partners, such as the nearby Temple Moor School, to enhance provision, including that of the sixth form. Work to promote community cohesion is strong and plays a significant role in helping Brigshaw pupils understand and respect other cultures, religions and customs. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. One example of this includes Year 11 pupils running football teams for younger pupils and

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those in local primary schools.

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

- Bring all teaching up to the standard of the best by:
- - ensuring that teachers use current assessment data when planning lessons so that activities can be adapted to better meet the needs of all pupils
- Build on the recent improvements in the sixth form to enable all students to achieve as well as they are able.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Good teaching, an extensive curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that the quality of learning and progress is good, including for looked after children. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their contemporaries. Results in 2009, and information from the school's tracking and monitoring system about current levels of progress confirm this. In lessons observed, pupils had positive attitudes to their learning and were well motivated. This was especially true in the good or better lessons where teachers ensured their learners were challenged and had work that was well matched to their abilities.

Results in English are well above average, with boys and girls achieving equally well. Results in mathematics have been below average in recent years, but are now rising quickly due to robust actions taken by senior leaders.

Pupils demonstrate many positive attributes in their personal development. They feel safe in school, and behave well. Some minor incidents of disruptive behaviour occur occasionally in lessons which do not engage them sufficiently. Incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly by senior leaders. Pupils and sixth form students make an exemplary contribution to the life of the school and beyond. Many are involved in the school council. Looked after children, encouraged by learning mentors, act as peer mentors for younger pupils. Pupils' preparation for their next stage of learning and the acquisition of workplace skills is very good. Pupils make the most of the many opportunities afforded by the schools' specialist status; their keenness to acquire language skills, including Japanese, is a splendid example. Pupils' awareness of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles is good. 'There are too many pizzas and cookies', was a typical questionnaire response from pupils who challenged the school to provide more healthy options.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching was good or better in the majority of the lessons observed but inspectors saw only a few outstanding lessons. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Questioning is used to good effect to challenge and to check pupils' understanding. Relationships are good and this helps to create a secure and enjoyable environment where pupils work well individually and in groups. Support from other adults in the classroom makes an effective contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In satisfactory lessons, the use of assessment information to plan activities that are well matched to the needs of individuals is too variable. As a result, pupils' learning and progress are slowed. In such lessons, there is often too much talking by the teacher, students become disengaged, and sometimes low-level disruptive behaviour ensues.

The curriculum is under constant review to ensure that it provides the best possible opportunities for all pupils. Languages are integrated well into all aspects of school life. Fast-track classes in some subjects enable the more able pupils to be stretched in their learning. The school enhances its vocational options through close work with partners including the local further education college and employers. Enrichment activities are extensive and play an essential role in cementing the community spirit in the school and in pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The management of this area is exemplary and is focused on removing barriers to learning. The support given to pupils joining Year 7 and those leaving Year 11 is excellent. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and looked after children receive very high quality support enabling them to

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progress in line with their peers. Other vulnerable pupils, including those at risk of becoming disaffected and those with behavioural issues are also extremely well supported. One pupil told us that 'this school has helped me to improve my behaviour'.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	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>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The acting headteacher, supported well by her senior staff, is determined to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they are able. A clearly communicated vision is understood and supported throughout the school and this is reflected in the effectiveness of middle managers and the willingness of teachers to improve their practice. Close scrutiny of examination results and pupils' progress ensures that the school leaders and middle managers have a clear picture of overall achievement. The management of teaching and learning has been effective in improving classroom practice and increasing the proportion of good teaching. However, the use of assessment information to inform teaching is relatively new and there is still more work to do here, especially where teaching remains satisfactory.

Equality of opportunity is central to the school's work. A great deal of attention is given to ensure that pupils are placed on pathways that will enable them to succeed well, both academically and personally. The school ensures that parents and carers are kept well informed about how well their children are progressing and how they can support them. Discussions with staff, with pupils and sixth form students make it clear that there is a culture of mutual respect and that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils with physical disabilities have access to the full curriculum, including out-of-school activities.

Brigshaw makes a good contribution to community cohesion. The school community is diverse but harmonious. An analysis of the school's context has informed action plans and these are carefully evaluated. Procedures for safeguarding are exemplary.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>2</b>
	3

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<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>2</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>1</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>2</b>

**Sixth form**

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Attainment is good in a number of subjects at GCE A level, especially English, but there is much variability across subjects. Attainment at AS level and in some vocational subjects is also variable. Recent interventions including training for sixth form teachers are paying dividends; there is an increasing proportion of teaching that is good and this is leading to more students, than in previous years, making good progress. However, students' progress, when compared to their prior attainment at GCSE is satisfactory, at best, in too many subjects. Strengthening the student monitoring process has enabled earlier intervention for students at risk of underachieving. However, the targets set, especially for the more able students, are often insufficiently challenging.

Close partnership working with nearby Temple Moor School has allowed the school to offer a good choice of GCE A and AS subjects and an increasing range of vocational subjects at intermediate and advanced levels. This good curriculum is ensuring that more students are able to follow and complete courses which precisely meet their needs. Students receive the same high quality care and support as those in the lower school. Students opting for university are well supported. However, the head of sixth form is aware that more support could be provided for those opting to go straight into employment or training.

Sixth form students are helpful, mature and happy with their experiences in the sixth form. They value highly the support they receive from their teachers. A good number of them volunteer to help lower down in the school; listening to students read, acting as buddies and mentors, taking assemblies and helping to fund raise for charities. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent interventions to improve sixth form provision are beginning to have a positive impact, but the head of sixth form is aware that there is still work to do to ensure greater consistency across subjects.



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*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	3

## Views of parents and carers

Overwhelmingly, parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that they were happy with their children's overall experience at school. A small number commented that behaviour was a problem, but inspectors found that this issue was mostly restricted to a small proportion of satisfactory lessons where a few pupils caused low-level disruption. A very high proportion of respondents think that the school is led well and managed effectively. A few parents and carers expressed a view that contacting the school was sometimes difficult and that it takes too long for the school to respond to queries. A small number of parents said they would like more opportunities to discuss their child's progress. The school recognises this and is endeavouring to rectify parental concerns.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brigshaw High School and Language 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 174 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1393 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	29	113	65	7	4	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	60	34	104	60	4	2	3	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	30	103	59	13	7	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	26	116	67	8	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	24	121	70	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	16	118	68	22	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	19	107	61	25	14	4	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)	56	32	96	55	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	26	106	61	12	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	24	95	55	23	13	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	16	116	67	11	6	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	51	29	110	63	5	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	38	96	55	6	3	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><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.**



4 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brigshaw High School and Language College, Castleford, WF10 2HR

Thank you for welcoming us during the recent inspection of your school. We appreciated the time we were able to spend with you talking about your school and the work that you do. Thank you also to those of you who completed the questionnaires to share your views. Most of you said that you enjoy school, particularly the wide range of out-of-school activities that are available, and that you feel very well cared for and supported by the staff.

Inspectors found that many of you are now making good progress because most of the teaching is good and there is a good choice of subjects available to meet your needs and aspirations at Key Stage 4. Your behaviour is good. A very small number of you misbehave in lessons and this is stopping others from learning. On the whole, you have positive attitudes and treat each other well. We were very impressed with the way you help others less fortunate than yourselves, by raising money for charities, and also by the way you volunteer to help run clubs and get involved in all sorts of activities both in and out of school.

Senior staff and other school leaders have made some very important improvements to your school since it was last inspected. We have asked them to focus on two things to ensure that you are all making the best possible progress:

- make sure that teachers get the assessment information they need to tailor lessons so that they meet your individual needs and also make sure you know how well you are doing
- build on recent improvements in the sixth form to enable all students to achieve as well as they are able.

We are sure that you will continue to make an excellent contribution to school life and help to support the school's further improvement.

Yours sincerely

Ms Josephine Nowacki

Her Majesty's Inspector

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