

Scalby School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121677
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380298
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Maddison HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	889
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Scoble
Headteacher	David Read
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2010
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

The inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors undertook 35 formal lesson observations. One inspector undertook a learning walk which comprised of a number of short visits to lessons to look at the provision for students who have special educational needs. Discussions were held with groups of students, senior staff, middle leaders, classroom teachers, three members of the governing body, and the school's local authority regional adviser. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, looked at safeguarding arrangements and a variety of documents provided by the school, including policies, data analyses and the school's self-evaluation. They analysed 121 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as the 190 questionnaires completed by a sample of students from each year group and the 41 questionnaires completed by staff.

Information about the school

Scalby School is an average-sized secondary school. Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. Whereas the proportion of students at School Action is above average, the proportion at School Action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Most of these students have behaviour, emotional and social difficulties or specific learning difficulties. The number of students who start or leave the school at different times of the school year is below the national average. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. At the previous inspection in March 2010 the school was judged to no longer require special measures. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2010. The school was awarded the International School Award in May 2011.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching across the school, while good overall, is not consistently strong enough to ensure that all students make exceptional progress.
- Achievement is good. Attainment is above average and students make good progress in their work. Some make outstanding progress though progress is not consistently good or better for all groups of students.
- The quality of teaching is good. Senior and middle leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teaching. There is a resolute determination to raise its quality to outstanding. In the very best lessons, teachers use engaging strategies to enable all students to make good and outstanding progress. However, in some lessons tasks set are not well matched to the needs of learners and opportunities are missed for students to develop as independent learners. Moreover, systems to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills are not fully embedded across the curriculum.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Students have positive attitudes to learning. Their attendance is average but it is improving. They feel safe and parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children are well looked after. However, the number of fixed-term exclusions involving a very small minority of students is too high.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Senior leaders are extremely well focused and have achieved much since the last inspection. The school's development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a strength, as is the system of pastoral care and guidance and the curriculum. Since coming out of special measures, the focus on improving achievement, strengthening teaching and learning and improving behaviour has helped to drive up attainment and embed improvements in examination results.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate and consolidate students' achievement by:
 - creating opportunities in all lessons for students to develop as independent learners
 - ensuring that the good and outstanding practice which exists in aligning learning activities closely to students' individual needs and academic targets is spread across the school
 - further embedding systems to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum
 - reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions by developing a range of alternative strategies for dealing with the very small minority of students whose behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion
 - improving further students' attendance and reducing the level of persistent absenteeism.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Since the last inspection, results in national examinations at the end of Key Stage 4 show that overall standards have continued to rise and attainment is above average. Students attained particularly well in some vocational courses, and the proportion of students who gained five subjects at the higher grades including English and mathematics has for the last three years been above the national average. Robust systems for monitoring progress and attainment ensure that appropriate action is taken to support those students who are identified as at risk of underachieving. Current analyses of students' academic performance show that results in both GCSE and vocational courses are likely to improve again this coming summer. Attainment on entry is average but it is improving. As a result, the school is adapting its curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of these higher-attaining students. Students are developing good literacy skills and the 'No Student Left Behind' initiative helps to enable those students who start Year 7 with weak reading skills to access the full curriculum with greater confidence. Strategies to improve both literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum are in place. However, they are not yet systematically embedded to have a substantial impact on the learning of all students.

Students make good progress in their learning and some make outstanding progress. In the best lessons observed, students made good and better progress because activities provided challenge and interest for every student. Expectations were high, learning captured their interest and they were expected to work things out for themselves. On the other hand, in the lessons where least progress was made, teaching failed to engage the students sufficiently. This was because there was too much emphasis upon completing tasks rather than embedding learning, there were insufficient opportunities for students to reflect upon their learning, and there was too much direction given by the teachers. As a result, in these lessons progress was satisfactory rather than good or better and the needs of all students were not being met.

The progress made by disabled students and those with special educational needs is good overall. Some make outstanding progress but, for others, progress is variable. The school is successfully closing the gap for a number of groups of students, for example, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals; they make good progress. Through the questionnaires the vast majority of parents and carers noted that their children were making good progress at the school. Inspectors agree. However, there is some underachievement in a small number of lessons especially where there is less effective teaching and insufficient challenge.

Quality of teaching

Questionnaire responses indicate that most parents and carers believe that their children are taught well, and this positive response is shared by the large majority of students. Inspectors agree that overall the quality of teaching is good and improving. Several examples of outstanding teaching were seen. However, some satisfactory and a small amount of inadequate teaching was also observed. Provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs is good. Most do well because of the sensitive support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants and because of the personalised programme of interventions.

In the lessons where students made most progress, teaching was stimulating. Teachers had good subject knowledge which they used to plan engaging activities which motivated students. Relationships between students and adults were good. Teachers explained clearly what was expected and provided challenge and support to ensure that all students could access the learning. Activities probed their thinking, extended their knowledge and strengthened their understanding. High expectations and a high level of challenge are motivating students to work hard and this is having a positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In one outstanding Year 8 lesson, students explored the meaning of marriage in different religions. In this lesson, students made excellent progress because, amongst other things, their learning was carefully planned, each member of each group had a specific activity, careful checks were made on the progress being made and focused questions explored their understanding. What is more, students were given time to think so that they could give extended answers which prompted further discussion. However, such first-rate practice is not yet spread across the school.

When students were expected to be passive learners and were not given a variety of activities which provided sufficient engagement and challenge, their interest soon waned. In these satisfactory lessons, teachers talked too much and students had insufficient opportunities to work things out for themselves. Questioning tended to require simplistic answers and insufficient time was provided for students to discuss their ideas before they were required to write. Such approaches constrained students' learning, as did the tendency of a small number of teachers to spend too long in a laborious explanation of grade and level descriptors. Curriculum planning is helping to ensure that students' needs and interests are being met well. Overall, the quality of marking is good. The effective use of comments to explain 'what went well' and 'even better if' provides students with a good understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

This is a calm and orderly school, not least because students' behaviour is good in lessons and around school. In corridors and on stairs students behave well showing courtesy to each other and to adults. In lessons, students have positive attitudes to learning and only when they are insufficiently challenged does their concentration lapse. A small number of parents and carers who completed the questionnaires expressed concerns about students' behaviour in lessons. A very small number of incidents of unacceptable behaviour was observed during the inspection. However, each was linked directly to teaching and learning activities which failed to engage the students fully and each was dealt with appropriately by the teachers. Parents and carers may be reassured that the school is well focused on ensuring high standards of good behaviour and improving it further

Attendance has been below the national average but the school has worked hard to improve it and to reduce persistent absenteeism. Attendance is now at the national average. However, persistent absenteeism is still high, as is the number of fixed-term exclusions. Senior leaders are well aware of this and, together with the governing body, are beginning to consider a range of alternative strategies to deal with the very small minority of students whose behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion. Most pupils feel that the school is a safe environment and the vast majority of parents and carers have the same view. Students report that there is very little bullying of any type. They comment that there is some name calling but that it is dealt with promptly. Pastoral care helps to promote students' personal and academic development well. Transition arrangements into the school at the start of Year 7 and when students leave at the end of Year 11 are also strong. The school is rightly proud of its inclusive approach and vulnerable students feel particularly well supported. As a result, the school is increasingly living up to its motto of 'Students First'.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and his senior team are highly effective; they have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the aspects which require improvement. Since coming out of special measures leaders and managers at all levels have worked hard to improve the school and in this they have had considerable success. Leadership at all levels is highly effective and, through robust systems for performance management, leaders are challenged and held to account. A succinct vision for the future direction of the school is shared by all staff and underpins the focused work of all leaders and managers. There is an awareness of where intervention is needed and effective strategies to support students in their learning are being implemented. Achievement is good and improving because the quality of teaching and students' behaviour and their learning, are all good and improving. An accurate understanding of the strengths in teaching of individual staff has led to effective and bespoke in-house training and support which is well focused on ensuring improvement in their performance. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement planning well focused. The governing body has a clear understanding of the issues facing the school and it uses its wealth of knowledge and experience astutely to support and challenge school leaders at all levels. In all these ways leaders and managers have shown that they have the capacity to embed ambition

and drive forward improvement and that their leadership of teaching and management of performance are outstanding.

The curriculum is a strength of the school and it meets students' differing needs and interests well. There are an increasing number of opportunities for students to meet people of different faiths and cultures and specific 'immersion' days enable students to explore a range of themes, such as 'risk' and 'your future'. In these ways, it provides extremely well for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and exemplifies the way in which senior leaders have responded enthusiastically and successfully to tackling the areas for improvement from the last inspection. Safeguarding practices are thorough and meet statutory requirements extremely well. They complement the highly effective care, guidance and support which is provided. Students' aspirations are being raised, equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination is tackled effectively. For example, the school monitors carefully the progress of all students and seeks to remove all barriers to their learning and participation.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 April 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Scalby School, Scarborough, YO12 6TH

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We greatly appreciated the time you spent talking to us and we found your comments very helpful. As well as coming into lessons and looking at your work, we read the questionnaires completed by you and your parents or carers. We believe your school is good and these are the reasons.

- Results in GCSE examinations are improving and you make good progress in your learning.
- Teaching is good. Your teachers have high expectations and you respond well with positive attitudes to your learning.
- Your behaviour is good around school and in lessons. You told us that you feel safe in school and that if there is any bullying it is promptly dealt with.
- Some aspects of your school are particular strengths, especially the curriculum, the support, care and guidance you are given, and leadership, which are outstanding.

We have asked senior leaders to continue the work they are doing to help you achieve as well as you can and gain better examination results. We have also asked them to focus on a number of priorities, which include making sure that:

- you are given work in your lessons which each of you finds challenging
- you are given more opportunities in lessons to work independently
- you have opportunities to improve your reading, writing, and numeracy skills in all your lessons.

The headteacher, senior leaders and teachers are determined to improve the school. However, you all have your part to play by coming to school regularly and working to the best of your ability. As a result, we have also asked the school to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions and to help those of you who need it to improve your attendance. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Maddison
Her Majesty's Inspector

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