

Ormesby School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111741
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	356975
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake 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	795
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr N Pocklington
Headteacher	Mr S Burrows
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2007
School address	Stockwith Close Netherfields, Middlesbrough North Yorkshire TS3 0RG
Telephone number	01642 452191
Fax number	01642 463018
Email address	steve_burrows@middlesbrough.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Twenty-six part lessons were observed, which involved 25 teachers. A range of documents was scrutinised and meetings held with members of the senior leadership team, nominated staff and a group of students. A telephone discussion was also held with the chair of the interim executive board. Other informal discussions were held with staff and a significant number of students during lessons and around the school. The inspectors also read 64 inspection questionnaires returned by parents, in addition to considering the views of those staff and students who completed separate questionnaires.

- Students' attainment, progress and overall achievement.
- The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The quality of teaching and its impact on raising standards of attainment.
- The overall effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels and including the governing body.

Information about the school

Ormesby School, which is smaller than the average-sized secondary school has specialist status for engineering. There are marginally fewer girls than boys on roll. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is over three times the national average. Almost all students are of white British heritage. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average and, of these, the school has almost four times the national average for those with a statement of special educational needs. The school holds a number of national and local awards, the most significant of which include the Healthy School Standard and Tees Valley Food Hygiene. In 2011, the school achieved the separate awards of the most improved specialist school and success in adding value from the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

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 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Ormesby School offers a satisfactory and improving standard of education for its students. Senior leaders and managers, including members of the interim executive board, are fully-committed to making the school a place where all students attend regularly, enjoy a range of different learning activities and achieve in line with their identified capabilities. From a historical background of low attainment and low levels of student aspirations, the school is now making important inroads into improving both. Although attainment levels in English and mathematics are still low, the latest school-generated data indicates that the students' progress will continue to follow an upward trend this year, so that achievement reaches at least a satisfactory standard, as it did last year. In a similar way, attendance has been traditionally low, with higher than average numbers of students who have chosen to become persistent absentees; but these are also changing, with the latest figures showing that the school is on line to achieve average rates of attendance by the end of this academic year. There is still a small minority whose regular attendance gives the school cause for concern, but all reasonable actions are currently being taken to tackle these in a way that is helpful to the students and their parents and/or carers. In most other respects, students' outcomes are satisfactory, although the extent to which they feel safe and their contribution to the school and wider community are both good.

The changing profile in the quality of teaching is the most impressive aspect of the school's work since the previous inspection. This is the result of a concerted course of actions, emerging from the regular monitoring of teaching across the school. Senior leaders and managers recognise that these are still early days in this process and that it needs to undertake further work to ensure that teachers and students continue to raise their levels of aspirations, and that the most effective classroom practice is regularly shared with all staff. However, the vast majority of teaching and learning is now of a good standard and is directly attributable to the improving trend in students' attainment and progress. A small number of lessons is still satisfactory, but even in these, the working relationships are secure and students' behaviour is good. The use of students' assessment information that relates to their prior learning is underused by teachers in their lesson planning, and most marking of work is of a competent standard but often incomplete in terms of identifying specific areas where the students can improve further. The changing shape of the curriculum, especially at Key Stage 4, is helping more students to take a greater range of accredited courses. At Key Stage 3, school-based curricular initiatives for the lower-attaining students are at an early stage of

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implementation. However, the school has yet to evaluate fully the impact of its curriculum on not only raising standards but on all aspects of the students' lives at the school.

The success of the school in showing that it can successfully tackle identified weakness also owes much to the developing work of the interim executive board. Plans are now at an advanced stage to convert back to a full governing body but, as yet, its role in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work remains undefined. The combination of improving rates of progress, improved quality of teaching and learning, and more robust leadership and management indicate the good capacity to improve further.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve students' attainment and rate of progress, especially in English and mathematics by:
 - increasing the use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning and match learning activities more closely to known capabilities
 - achieving a greater consistency in good quality marking across all curricular subjects.
- Further develop the management strategy for the regular monitoring of all teaching and its impact students' learning by:
 - sharing those aspects of classroom practice that are most effective in raising levels of attainment
 - continuing to raise the levels of aspirations for both staff and students.
- Monitor and evaluate the full curriculum to ensure that all students have access to a balanced provision.
- Develop the evaluation and monitoring role of the governing body as an aid to it holding the school to account for improving all student outcomes, the quality of provision, and the impact of leadership and management at all levels.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The students' attainment on starting at the school in Year 7 varies from year to year but is generally on the lower end of average, or is below average. Historically, by the time the students reach the end of Year 11 their attainment is low, especially in English and mathematics. However, the 2010 results show a turning point in the students' attainment and overall progress. Although attainment was still low, the students improved in all areas, most significantly in the 33% increase in the proportion achieving five or more A* to C grades. These improving patterns of attainment and progress were confirmed by inspectors. The students' achievement is now satisfactory and improving strongly, but is better in mathematics than English. Almost all groups, including those

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with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

Senior managers and leaders are alert to the attainment and progress issues facing the school, and have successfully implemented a range of targeted intervention strategies aimed at helping the students achieve closer to their identified capabilities, as an aid to attainment reaching at least national averages. The attitudes shown by students in lessons, particularly when working as individuals, in pairs or larger groups are good and are contributing positively to their improving rate of progress. Where progress slows, however, it is the direct result of less effective teaching, which is too often characterised by excessive teacher talk and over-direction of learning tasks that do not always challenge students of all abilities.

A large majority of students say that they feel safe in school. The students are confident in disposition and manner, and their good standard of behaviour is helping the positive working relationships that are developing throughout the school. The school's achievement of the Healthy School Standard, together with a programme of physical education and extra-curricular sport means that there is satisfactory support for promoting the students' general well-being through raising the profile of healthier lifestyles. Attendance is low but is improving strongly, with the overall rate achieved at the half-way point through this academic year now reaching an average level. This improving trend is also due to the successful work of the school in reducing the number of persistent absentees.

The students' contribution to the school and wider community is good overall. The focus on learning and acquiring key skills in literacy and numeracy is helping to ensure that the students are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory; it is strongest in moral and social development where the students know clearly how to behave in lessons and when moving around the school site. The curriculum and other school-based activities are helping the students to appreciate and develop a greater understanding of life outside of school satisfactorily; for example, through the recent links with Ghana.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is generally good, although some is firmly rooted in being satisfactory. Overall, teachers across the school have good subject knowledge, which they use well to engage the students in whole-class 'question and answer' discussions. Some of this questioning extends the students' learning, but some tends to reinforce what was previously learned with insufficient emphasis on developing the learning further as preparation for new work. All lessons have clear objectives, but where teaching is most effective, the teachers use these to challenge students with well-managed activities that add pace to learning through the good use of teaching time. There is structured and effective use of support assistants, most often through the targeted support for identified students. Where teaching embraces a range of different learning strategies for the students, activities are well-matched to their individual needs and abilities and also include the effective use of information technology. Where some lessons lack sufficient pace or a range of challenging activities, teachers direct learning to such an extent that the students become passive and show little by way of independent thinking or working. Teachers have a good understanding of students' attainment levels but these are not consistently used across the school to inform subsequent planning. The students are aware of their personal targets, but many are not able to talk specifically about what is required to improve upon their work and achieve an even higher standard.

The curriculum satisfactorily meets students' needs, interests and aspirations, and prepares them appropriately for the next stage of their personal development. External links through the Middlesbrough Subject Network¹ and the school's specialist status in

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engineering make a positive contribution to provision. The curriculum has broadened since the previous inspection, especially at Key Stage 4 where there is now a greater range of courses on offer, especially in the vocational field, which includes an engineering diploma. The 'themed' curriculum for lower-attaining students at Key Stage 3 is still at an early stage of implementation. While this is well-directed to individual needs, access to some subjects for these students is currently limited; for example, there is no regular provision for music. The overall curriculum is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities, but the current uptake is limited, especially in the area of sport.

The effectiveness of the school's provision for the care, guidance and support is satisfactory and improving. Key staff, such as heads of house and the special educational needs co-ordinator, work well with teaching staff and support assistants to provide pastoral support and care to meet the varying needs of all students. The quality of student support is also well-established within the transition arrangements, to and from the school, and in the 'catch-up' sessions that provide extra learning opportunities for those students who miss or fall behind with their work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and managers have been successful in tackling all leadership and management issues raised in the previous inspection report. Detailed planning has enabled the school to set challenging targets for raising attainment and improving provision. Together with frequent and effective lines of communication throughout the school, and robust accountability procedures, managers at all levels now share a common purpose and vision for school improvement; this has also brought about a clearer consensus view of the strengths and relative weakness of the school.

The senior leadership team has instigated a wide range of effective strategies to improve teaching and learning, with initiatives such as 'learning walks' focusing on the specific needs of individual teachers as well as on key priorities that make learning more effective and fun for the students. The school has also made good use of external specialists to help improve the teachers' repertoire of more varied teaching styles as an aid to raising standards. Other partnership links, some of which relate specifically to the school's specialist engineering provision, are making for better and more extended learning opportunities for the students.

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The school is taking all reasonable actions to safeguard the students, including the completion of a single central register, which contains details of all relevant safety checks for those adults who work or visit the school on a regular basis. Appropriate actions are being taken to promote equality within the school, with targeted intervention of underperforming groups, which has helped them to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. The school has a good understanding of its own community and is developing further its links with the local community. There are satisfactory opportunities for the students to learn about aspects of different national and international communities. The school has developed good links with the parents and carers of those students with identified learning needs, but recognises that it has much more to do with others who are currently less well engaged with the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

The overall response rate of 7.85 is very low. The overwhelming majority of the responses were positive but a very small number of parents and carers took the opportunity to write some additional comments on their questionnaire. These included concerns about bullying, insufficient homework that doesn't always build on previous class work, lack of physical education opportunities at Key Stage 4 and also limited extra-curricular activities, and too few parental consultation evenings. Many of these aspects were scrutinised during the inspection, but due to the very late return of the questionnaires during the mid-morning on day 2, it was not possible to follow up on all these aspects in detail. However, inspectors did report back to the school on some

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aspects, including the limited extra-curricular sporting provision within the school. No incidents of bullying were witnessed and the 97% response in the students' questionnaires confirmed that 'feeling safe' was good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ormesby 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 795 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	30	39	61	2	3	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	26	41	32	50	2	3	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	47	26	41	5	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	39	31	48	4	6	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	19	30	40	63	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	38	30	47	6	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	30	32	50	6	9	3	5
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)	23	36	35	55	2	3	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	39	30	47	5	8	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	36	28	44	9	14	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	19	39	61	5	8	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	20	31	37	58	2	3	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	36	32	50	3	5	3	5

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



21 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Ormesby School, Middlesbrough, TS3 0RG

I write on behalf of the inspectors who recently visited your school to thank you for the welcome you gave us, your behaviour and willingness to talk with us about your work and life at Ormesby School.

I am sure that you and your parents or carers would be interested to know what the inspectors thought about your school and I hope, therefore, that you find the following of sufficient interest to encourage you to continue working hard so that all of you achieve the best of which you are capable.

- Ormesby School offers a satisfactory and improving standard of education.
- Senior leaders and managers, including members of the interim executive board, are fully committed to making the school even better.
- Although attainment in English and mathematics is low, it is improving so that the vast majority of you make satisfactory progress by the time you reach the end of Year 11.
- Overall attendance is low but improving strongly. However, there is still a small minority whose regular attendance gives the school cause for concern, but action is being taken in a way that is helpful to these students, and their parents or carers.
- Almost all of you who spoke with inspectors said you feel safe in school.
- There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, with the vast majority now reaching a good standard. Some is still satisfactory, but senior managers are aware of this and are taking further action to improve the overall quality even further.
- The curriculum, especially at Key Stage 4, is helping more students to take a greater range of accredited courses. Curriculum initiatives at Key Stage 3 are at an early stage of implementation.

The inspection team has identified the following areas to help the school make even more progress over the next couple of years.

- Improve attainment and progress, especially in English and mathematics, by ensuring that all teachers use assessment information in their planning of lessons and, also, that their marking of your work helps you to know how well you have

done and what you can do to improve your work further.

- Continue to develop a strategy for monitoring all teaching and its impact on learning by regularly sharing best classroom practice, and by continuing to raise the aspirations of staff and students.
- Assess the curriculum to ensure that all students have access to a balanced provision.
- Develop further the role of the governing body as an aid to them holding the school to account for improving all student outcomes, the quality of provision, and the success of all leaders and managers.

I wish you all the very best for a successful future.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Blake

Her Majesty's Inspector

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