

Baysgarth School - A Specialist Technology College

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 118109 |
| Local Authority | North Lincolnshire |
| Inspection number | 326765 |
| Inspection dates | 10–11 June 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Marianne Young HMI |

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

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|---|---|
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 11–18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 960 |
| Sixth form | 80 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Peter Swann |
| Headteacher | Mr Colin Saywell |
| Date of previous school inspection | May 2006 |
| School address | Barrow Road Barton-upon-Humber DN18 6AE |
| Telephone number | 01652 632576 |
| Fax number | 01652 635973 |

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|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 11–18 |
| Inspection date(s) | 10–11 June 2009 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Baysgarth School is an average size secondary school with a small number of students in the sixth form. The school provides education for students from the town of Barton upon Humber and surrounding villages in North Lincolnshire. The majority of students are White British. A broadly average number of students are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students who have statements of special educational need is above average. Specialist technology status was awarded in 2005 and the school holds a number of national awards including Healthy Schools and Artsmark Silver. Since 2008, the school has formed a loose federation with two other secondary schools in a nearby town in order to increase provision for sixth form students.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards attained by students and their achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and the inconsistent practice of some middle leaders and managers in driving improvement.

Students enjoy attending Baysgarth School and this is clearly demonstrated by their above average attendance and involvement in extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities. Some of these enable older students to coach younger ones, or work with pupils in the local primary schools. These opportunities, together with visits locally and abroad, help effectively to develop students' understanding of, and contribution to, community cohesion. Relations between adults and students are generally positive. Students have a well developed sense of right and wrong and they are polite and courteous to teachers and visitors.

Leaders at all levels have not secured improvements in standards across the school of the magnitude or rapidity that could be reasonably expected since the time of the last inspection. Overall, standards at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2008 were too low and students underachieved in several subjects. Not all specialist subject targets were achieved. The school has been adversely affected by significant staffing problems especially in the English and mathematics departments. Recent appointments to these subjects, combined with more regular and accurate tracking of students' progress, mean that students are likely to improve their performance this year. It is, however, too early to know whether this improvement is to be maintained.

Strategies to improve teaching and learning, a key focus of the school's work, have been limited in their impact. The satisfactory teaching seen during the inspection delivers too few lessons where learning is good. Most teachers have a good knowledge of their subject; however too often expectations are not high enough because teachers do not make best use of the available information about students' abilities. The pace of some lessons is slow and students are not always sufficiently engaged in their learning. Some students receive little or no advice on how to improve their work, or even recognition for the work they have produced in their books.

Students report that they are well cared for. However, together with their parents, some have mixed views about the recently introduced vertical tutor groups. This has also led to some anxiety from a small minority of parents about the lack of traditional parents' evenings with opportunities to discuss their children's progress with subject teachers. Independent advice about careers is provided for all students at Key Stage 4 and the electronic on-line application system encourages them to apply for further education and training. However, students' weaknesses in basic skills restrict the choices available to some of them. Established and recent links with other institutions

have increased the range of work-related courses and opportunities for progression at the age of 16.

Senior leaders have successfully established a safe and caring environment in which students develop as polite young people with a clear sense of values. However they have been less successful in addressing long-term weaknesses in academic outcomes. For example, the levels of targets set are inconsistent and often insufficiently aspirational and challenging for differing ability levels. Systems to monitor classroom practice, particularly those led by some middle leaders, are inconsistently applied and often lack sufficient rigour to eradicate underachievement. Consequently practice varies too widely.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The sixth form's effectiveness is satisfactory. Students enter Year 12 with standards below those usually found nationally and achieve satisfactorily in line with their abilities. Results of AS and A level examinations in 2008 were below average, especially at grades A and B. However the large majority of students completed the courses they began and gained pass grades. Students achieved particularly well in the applied subject courses of information and communication technology (ICT) and science. Sixth formers are mature and have very positive attitudes to learning and the wider school and local communities. For example, they support younger students' learning in the school and in partner primary schools, linked mainly to the school's specialist status work. The curriculum is restricted to advanced courses and lacks opportunities for students whose potential is below this level. However plans are well advanced to increase the range of learning opportunities from September 2009 to meet more individual needs. Extra-curricular opportunities are good and students particularly enjoy the overseas trips which extend and develop their understanding of education in other countries. Academic guidance and pastoral support are helpful and appreciated by the students. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders have established good working relationships with two schools in the nearby town of Brigg to extend the range of advanced courses, but the system to ensure the quality of education students receive off-site is not fully developed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in all subjects and eradicate underachievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching to increase the proportion of lessons in which students make good or better progress especially by:
 - challenging all students appropriately in lessons
 - marking work regularly so that students know how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Increase the rigour of monitoring, especially by middle managers, and use the outcomes of this process more effectively in order to raise expectations, improve the quality of teaching and learning and meet challenging targets.
- Ensure that achievement is consistently good in all subjects in the sixth form.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Students enter the school in Year 7 attaining standards that are close to those typically found nationally. By the end of Year 11 standards overall have been below average in the three years since the school was last inspected and students' achievement and progress are inadequate.

In the 2008 GCSE examinations standards, overall, were below average. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades has increased slightly since the last inspection. However when English and mathematics are included, this figure indicates that students' attainment has not improved at the same rate as that seen nationally. Although the 2009 Key Stage 4 results predicted by the school's tracking data show significant improvement, mathematics has not improved as rapidly as English and science and consequently remains a priority for further improvement.

There has been some improvement in standards in mathematics in the recent Year 9 standard assessment tests that the school has voluntarily undertaken, but English results are low especially at the higher level. For the last two years and until recently, both English and mathematics departments have lacked sufficient specialist subject teachers, and this has contributed to students' underachievement in these subjects.

There is too much flexibility in the process of target-setting to ensure a concerted drive to improve achievement and standards. Challenging targets are set and reached in design and technology, but far less demanding targets are set in many other subjects. Not all specialist subject targets are achieved.

Students with learning and behavioural difficulties achieved below the standards expected of them at Key Stage 4 in 2008. Several students followed alternative educational provision off-site and although they attended regularly, this arrangement reduced their opportunities to gain academic qualifications. The school has acted to improve matters; new arrangements allow these students to attain an appropriate range of qualifications.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students have a well developed sense of right and wrong, they cooperate successfully together and the vast majority show respect for their peers and adults. Behaviour has improved with most students behaving well. Students and parents agree that incidents of bullying and racism are rare and are promptly dealt with if they do occur. Students enjoy coming to school as shown by their above average attendance, the decreasing number who are excluded from school and the large number who take part in the wide range of activities out of lesson time. Students understand how to improve the quality of their diet with the majority choosing healthy options in the dining hall. They have a good understanding of the dangers associated with substance misuse.

Students' spiritual development is underdeveloped because opportunities to promote it are limited but their understanding of Britain as a diverse society is increasing well. Students are able to express their views and make an effective contribution to the school community as a result of taking part in the various opportunities available to them. For example, students work successfully as peer mentors at Baysgarth and with younger pupils in local primary schools. Students are adequately prepared for their future lives through the acquisition of computer and workplace skills, but other basic skills are insufficiently developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Whilst the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, the proportion that is good or better is not high enough to lead to good achievement or raise standards substantially. In the most successful lessons planning is thorough and based on a good knowledge of students' needs. Objectives are precise and understood by students. Explanations are clear and skilful questioning helps students to improve their understanding. Tasks are varied, closely match the objectives set and well chosen resources help engage students. As a result, students make good progress and enjoy a real sense of achievement.

Many of the satisfactory lessons are characterised by a slower pace and work that is undemanding and less well-suited to students' varying abilities. Lessons are too teacher-led with activities that are mundane so students are insufficiently engaged in their learning. Opportunities for students to work independently and assess and discuss their own and others' work are missed. Homework is not well used to develop learning; too often students are expected to finish work started in lessons. A few teachers mark work regularly and provide comments which help students understand how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has introduced an increased range of vocational subjects for students in Key Stage 4 to better reflect their needs and to promote clear progression routes to local colleges and the sixth form. However it is too early to judge the impact that these developments will have upon students' achievement. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended and valued by many students. These activities, together with visits both locally and internationally, successfully promote students' enjoyment and personal development. Technology status is used successfully to enhance provision, especially the transition arrangements with local primary schools. Curriculum choice for vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is appropriate and personalised to their specific needs and abilities. Another strength is work-based learning where students, especially those who find traditional lessons challenging, undertake learning out of school and are then generally able to re-engage successfully into class lessons. However, opportunities to develop students' basic skills especially in literacy and numeracy, which underpin their future economic well-being, are not delivered or planned coherently.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes very seriously its duty of care; safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place and meet current Government requirements. Good supervision provides a safe and supportive environment for students. The student support area is a focal point for internal and external support and provides well for a wide range of individual needs. Students report that they have no worries about their personal safety and have confidence in approaching adults if they have particular concerns. Sixth form students particularly, appreciate the readiness teachers show to listen and provide guidance and support if necessary. Students who are at risk of failing to enter education, employment or training when they leave school are successfully identified and helped to find appropriate avenues after the age of 16. Vulnerable students and those who find learning challenging are supported well. Whilst pastoral support is good, academic support is less effective in ensuring all students reach the standards of which they are capable. Students generally know their individual targets, but the advice given to them on how they can improve is variable.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders recognise that the school has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Overall, the pace of change has been too slow and the actions of senior leaders have not been robust enough to rectify weaknesses in students' academic progress. Inconsistency, especially at middle leadership level, has been prevalent throughout the school despite the introduction of a comprehensive range of systems to monitor progress. Senior leaders have sought external advice and support to provide examples of good practice for all leaders. They recognise that more effective support and challenge is required at middle leadership level if the school is to secure consistency in practice and measurable improvements, particularly in the proportion of lessons where learning is good.

There are other aspects of the school's work that are also inconsistent, for example, the patchy development of key skills across the curriculum and the inconsistent application of the school's marking policy, both of which were highlighted in the last inspection report. Good practice exists in the quality of teaching and learning, but this is not being shared sufficiently across the school. Nonetheless, together with some indications that standards are rising and staffing issues in core subjects are being resolved, this contributes to the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. The school satisfactorily promotes community cohesion, with productive partnerships with other schools, businesses and organisations within the local and wider community.

The governing body are hard working and bring a range of skills to support the development of the school. Governors are becoming more challenging and evaluative of the school's performance.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate. | School Overall | 16–19 |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 4 | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of boarding provision | N/A | |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 | 3 |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| How well do learners achieve? | 4 | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 4 | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 4 | |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|----------|----------|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 | |

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

The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|----------|-----------------------|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 3 | IE² |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 | 3 |

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 | |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 4 | |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 | |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 | |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 4 | |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No | |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | Yes | |

² IE – denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Annex B



7 July 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Baysgarth School - A Specialist Technology College, North Lincolnshire DN18 6AE

Thank you for making us welcome when we came to inspect your school. We read carefully the questionnaires completed by your parents and carers. These were helpful to us. Those of you we talked to told us you enjoy school and it is evident that lots of you take part in the many activities and visits out of lesson time. Behaviour is generally good as shown by the way many of you socialise with each other.

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. However this is not the case in the main school. Since the last inspection, progress has not been rapid enough and some of you are not reaching the standards of which you are capable. Test and examination results at Baysgarth vary quite considerably. Some students and some subjects perform well, but this is not always the case. This can adversely affect your choices when you select courses and options at the age of 16. Some teaching is exciting and helps you make good progress. However too much is dull and lessons are not planned sufficiently well to meet your individual needs. For these reasons we have judged that Baysgarth requires a notice to improve. This means the school will receive extra visits from inspectors to ensure improvements are made more rapidly.

We have asked the headteacher, the governors and staff to make important improvements by:

- raising standards in all subjects and eradicating underachievement
- improving the quality of teaching to increase the proportion of lessons in which you make good or better progress
- increasing the rigour of monitoring, especially by middle managers
- ensuring that achievement is consistently good in all subjects in the sixth form.

We look forward to hearing of your progress.

Yours faithfully,

Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector