

Lady Lumley's School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121671
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359062
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2010
Reporting inspector	John Young HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	971
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Garbutt
Headteacher	Mr R Bramley
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2007
School address	Swainsea Lane Pickering North Yorkshire YO18 8NG
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 29 lessons involving 29 different teachers and covering 17 subjects. They held discussions with school staff, a local authority representative, the Chair of the Governing Body and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of other evidence including action plans, case studies and self-evaluation documents. Inspectors also analysed the 289 responses to parent and carer questionnaires, 78 staff questionnaires and 146 students' questionnaires.

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

- The attainment and achievement of different groups of students.
- The quality and consistency of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- The efficiency and effectiveness of the sixth form.
- Whether the school had sustained or improved their effectiveness.

Information about the school

At this average-sized secondary school almost all students are White British and live locally. The remaining tiny numbers of students originate from a variety of minority ethnic heritages including Russian, Chinese and Black Caribbean. Very few students speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is less than half the national average. The numbers of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also much lower than national averages.

The school has High Performing Specialist Sports College status and has a secondary specialism in modern foreign languages. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy School status, the Sportsmark and the International School award. The school also provides extended services such as study support, family learning courses and community access to their facilities. Some courses in the sixth form are delivered by neighbouring schools as part of a collaborative arrangement between four secondary schools in the area. The school is an Enhanced Mainstream School for students with specific learning difficulties. Since the last inspection, although staffing has remained fairly stable, there has been some reorganisation, and departures, at senior leader level.

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

Students, parents, carers and staff are proud of this good school which has embedded itself at the heart of the community. This is epitomised by the extended services it offers and the outreach work of the school's specialist subjects. In what has been a high performing school over time, leaders are strategically driving improvement. However, it has not been plain sailing since the last inspection and the school has worked hard to increase the effectiveness of the sixth form and maintain standards of attainment in the main school. To this end, senior leaders have taken some tough decisions and withdrawn courses, reorganised staffing where results were disappointing, and strengthened support strategies. However, in 2010, there were performance dips in English, among more-able girls, some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and in some vocational subjects. Also, few students known to be eligible for free school meals gain five A* to C at GCSE including English & mathematics. So, despite the overall ratio of students gaining five A* to C including English and mathematics remaining above average, there is room for improvement among the groups highlighted. Encouragingly, inspection evidence and the school's latest monitoring data indicate students throughout the school are making good progress and attainment is mostly above average. Students develop a good range of personal, social and work-based skills that will assist them in the future. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also effective. Good teaching, an effective curriculum and good care, guidance and support facilitate students' good learning and progress. However, the school needs to ensure all staff make best use of the student data available to them to support all groups of students' learning.

After a difficult period the effectiveness of the sixth form is now satisfactory overall which is reflected in an improving attainment profile, students' broadly satisfactory academic outcomes, a satisfactory quality of provision and the satisfactory but improving impact of leaders and management. The school recognises that further improvement is necessary if students are to fully realise their potential.

Leaders and managers at all levels are capable and work effectively. Parent and carer engagement is good overall and regular newsletters, celebration events and consultations typify the ways the school reaches out to them. Governance is good and robustly challenges as well as supports the school to provide good value for money. Accurate self-evaluation, the success of intervention strategies to address shortcomings, together with sustained above average outcomes and good quality provision signify that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve. Most parents and carers are happy with the school's work. Of the tiny minority that were not, inspectors investigated, and found some evidence to support their reservations regarding procedures for sending students home in adverse weather conditions at short notice and the implementation of the dress code by the headteacher.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the achievement of all students but particularly more-able girls, students known to be eligible for free school meals and some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that their attainment rises and more of them reach the highest grades and/or gain an A* to C in both English and mathematics by:
 - - giving students greater opportunities to develop, apply and reinforce their English and mathematics skills across the curriculum
 - - ensuring learning and progress are at least good for all groups of students relative to their starting points and capabilities
 - - earlier identification and intervention for any students falling behind and more effective support for those underperforming.
- Continue to improve students' academic achievement during their time in the sixth form so that their attainment rises and better reflects their capabilities by:
 - - ensuring the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good
 - - ensuring students are always placed on the most appropriate courses
 - - ensuring assessment strategies effectively support students' learning.
- Building on the good practice that already exists to improve the consistency and impact of assessment practices and procedures to support students' learning by:
 - - ensuring marking and feedback are precise and tell students how well they are doing and exactly what they can do to reach or exceed their targets
 - - ensuring all staff use the available assessment data to help them plan and deliver lessons that appropriately challenge and engage all students
 - - sharing and embedding the most effective practice in the school.
- Changing the perceptions of those parents and carers who do not feel the school communicates well with them or listens to and acts on their concerns by:
 - - publicising more effectively the various support the school provides
 - - ensuring communications with parents and carers and the implementation of school rules or emergency procedures are always timely, clear and appropriate.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most students enjoy the educational experience the school provides them with. They demonstrate this through: their good behaviour; good attendance; self-motivation; above average attainment and good achievement. Students can think critically, learn independently and evaluate their own and others' work which increases the quality, and pace at which they work. They can also sustain their concentration for long periods of time. Consequently, students' acquire and consolidate new knowledge, understanding and skills well. Generally, students thrive in the challenging, yet supportive learning climate staff create. As a result, their attainment by the end of Year 11 consistently exceeds national averages. This represents good achievement given that their prior attainment on entry to school is broadly average. Outcomes in the specialist status subjects are

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particularly strong. Historically, the proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals attaining five A* to C GCSE's including mathematics and English is low. Moreover, the learning and progress of some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are satisfactory rather than good, despite some strong performance among individual students. The school recognises that the relative attainment and achievement of these groups together with that of more-able girls need to improve. Inspection evidence and the school's own robust data show that currently, students across the school are making good progress.

Students' behaviour is usually good and at times it is impeccable. This is reflected in their demeanour, the way they relate to each other and staff, and the few exclusions. While students' adoption of healthy lifestyles is good overall and well promoted by the curriculum and specialist subjects, some students, parents and carers feel that healthy food is not readily available. Students proudly engage in a range of school and wider community-based activities. They raise funds for 'Help the Heroes', maintain a fruit and vegetable garden, sing for local residents, act as councillors, and work with children in local primary schools. Students develop a good range of key skills which will help them in the future. They are enterprising and run their own shop, and they are confident and can work effectively in teams, and independently. Their attendance is above average. The curriculum and various enrichment activities have helped students to develop a good awareness of religious, cultural and social diversity. They are reflective, curious about the world around them and know right from wrong.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good with elements that are outstanding. Staff work hard and use their very good subject knowledge and a range of suitable resources and learning styles to establish a good climate for learning. This leads to interesting, challenging lessons which students clearly enjoy. They pose open and searching questions and problems that allow students to refine and consolidate key learning techniques, and to demonstrate their new knowledge and understanding of key concepts. Less successful aspects of the teaching and learning observed during the inspection included unclear objectives which meant that students did not really know what is expected of them, and a lack of challenge and pace which resulted in students' passivity, disengagement and slower progress. There are also missed opportunities to allow students to develop, apply and reinforce their mathematics and English skills across the curriculum. The use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory rather than good at present due to inconsistency in the use of agreed procedures among staff and some variance in impact on groups of students' progress.

The quality and range of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities available to students are good. Provision has been refined to try and ensure that irrespective of their aptitude all students, including more vulnerable and more challenging students have access to wide-ranging experiences which enable them to learn and progress. Available routes include GCSE's, BTEC's, work placements, diplomas and fast-track language courses. There are also technology, business and sports-related activities and a series of whole-school curriculum days which enable students to immerse themselves in particular themes such as understanding industry. The curriculum is enriched by an impressive range of additional activities, many of which are inspired by the school's dual specialisms and the performing arts.

The good care, guidance and support students receive are major factors in their strong personal and social development. Staff develop good relationships with students and the well-targeted and individualised approach they adopt reinforces students' sense of security. Success in supporting vulnerable students and good provision for students who speak English as an additional language typify the school's strong pastoral welfare. Academic guidance is also effective and exemplified in most students' impressive attainment and achievement. They benefit from high-quality guidance as they join, move through, and leave the school, which enables them to make informed choices about their futures. Consequently, the numbers who are not in education, employment or training after they leave school is exceptionally low.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have taken decisive and effective action to sustain the school's overall effectiveness and improve the underperforming sixth form. Some of these measures have not proved popular among some staff but are part of a long-term strategy. Leaders are involving staff more in decision making through a series of focus groups to develop and refine curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment procedures. Staff accountability has increased and roles and responsibilities clarified. The management of teaching and learning is effective with regular scrutiny of students' work and progress, staff planning, delivery and assessment. Focused training, mentoring and coaching are helping to improve the consistency and effectiveness of teaching.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is good, evidenced by the many ways it helps them to support their children's learning, keeps them informed, and involves them in school life. For example, consultation evenings are very well attended and the headteacher's blog got 1500 hits a day during the recent severe weather. However, a small minority remain unhappy with some aspects of the school's work. There are some good partnerships in place, without which students' learning and well-being would be adversely affected. These include: Post-16; student support services; extended and partner-school links. The school effectively promotes equality and challenges discrimination through the curriculum, assemblies, visits and visitors. Their analysis of different group's performance is helping to better target their support for them. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good and students know that they are part of a school, local, and global community. This is epitomised by the international links established with schools in China and Tanzania, a special school and the specialist subjects' activities which place the school at the heart of the local community. Safeguarding procedures are good overall and site security and safety, the safer recruitment of staff, child protection and risk assessment arrangements are rigorous. Designated staff are highly trained and knowledgeable and record keeping is rigorous. Governance is good. It uses a range of methods to hold leaders to account as well as supporting them, such as the headteacher's performance management, a series of committees which staff must report to, and by scrutinising aspects of the school's work. Value for money is good because resources are deployed suitably to secure good outcomes for individuals and groups of students. Financial management is sound.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The sixth form is popular and transfer into it from the main school is high. Although there has been some considerable variation in the success rates between and within courses over time, more recently there has been an upturn in students' attainment. Overall, students make broadly satisfactory progress during their time in Years 12 and 13, although too few students gain the highest grades and there is some underachievement in subjects such as mathematics. Despite this, 85% of students move on to higher education and 10% employment or training. Retention rates with the exception of psychology and German are high.

Attendance is above average. Behaviour is good in lessons and sets a sound platform for learning. Students have sensible attitudes to their own and others' well-being and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Teaching is having a satisfactory impact on students' learning and progress. Learning is most effective when staff had very specific learning intentions, high expectations and used their strong subject knowledge to create a good climate for learning. Less successful aspects of the teaching and learning observed during the inspection included a lack of student engagement, challenge or planning to meet students' individual needs. Assessment and tracking vary in quality between departments but are becoming more rigorous. The curriculum is satisfactory but has broadened to better accommodate the needs and interests of a wider range of students, through, for example, vocational courses. This provision is enhanced by a range of additional activities for which there is a good take-up, including various creative and sporting options. Counselling and support for students are generally good.

The impact of leaders and managers is satisfactory and improving and is reflected in the satisfactory overall effectiveness of the sixth form after a difficult period when performance was deteriorating. The new head of the sixth form has taken a number of effective steps to arrest the decline. These include: a focus on maximising the

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effectiveness of teaching on learning; acting more proactively to identify and support students at risk of falling behind; rigorous monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the sixth form's work, and holding staff firmly to account for students' performance.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of the parents and carers who gave their views were very positive about the school and the work it does on behalf of their children. They are very satisfied with their children's experience at school and believe their children are making enough progress. A very small minority express concern that the school does not listen to and act on their concerns and suggestions or help them to support their children's learning and had concerns about the quality of leadership and management. Inspectors investigated and found that despite the school's good overall engagement with most parents and carers, awareness could be increased of the communication and support channels open to them, and some school procedures modified. They have asked the school to address this as part of the recommendations for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lady Lumley's 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 289 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 971 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	30	182	63	15	5	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	84	29	195	67	5	2	3	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	67	23	194	67	20	7	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	26	187	65	20	7	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	64	22	204	71	9	3	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	16	181	63	42	15	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	16	192	66	39	13	2	1
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)	81	28	175	61	18	6	5	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	22	197	68	21	7	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	20	184	64	20	7	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	16	169	58	32	11	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	63	22	176	61	20	7	14	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	30	183	63	13	4	2	1

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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



9 December 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Lady Lumley's School, Pickering YO18 8NG

Thank you for being courteous to the inspectors when we visited recently. We learned a lot from observing your lessons and talking with some of you. We also read with interest the views you, your parents and carers expressed in the questionnaires.

Well done! We judged that the school gives you a good education. We know this will delight you and your parents and carers because you told us how much you enjoy school. We found that good teaching helps many of you to make good progress and attain standards that are above national averages. Your specialist status subjects are high profile and influential across the curriculum, and in the local community. But, the performance of some groups of students is not as strong as it could be. Your personal and social development is very good and you take seriously the many responsibilities you are given. We found that you are ambitious, confident, behave well, and attend school regularly. The curriculum is good and you clearly enjoy the many visits, visitors, competitions, events and themed activities you have. Staff take good care of you and you receive the support and guidance you need to do well. Senior leaders work effectively to ensure the school runs efficiently. Dress code rules remain high; the headteacher will encourage you to take responsibility for adjusting your ties!

In order for the school to improve further we have asked staff to:

- improve the achievement and attainment of some groups of students
- continue to raise attainment and the quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form
- ensure assessment strategies are used effectively to improve students' learning
- improve the perceptions of those parents and carers who do not feel the school communicates well with them or listens to and acts on their concerns.

You can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely

John Young

Her Majesty's Inspector

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