

Moseley School A Language College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103519
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355400
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Cathryn Kirby 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	1392
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Beanland
Headteacher	Tim Boyes
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
School address	College Road Moseley Birmingham
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 55 lessons taught by 51 teachers. Meetings were held with school leaders, groups of pupils, a group of sixth form students, teachers, representatives of the interim executive board and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school improvement plans, minutes of meetings, records of monitoring and evaluation, school policies and pupils' work. In addition they looked at responses to questionnaires completed by students, staff and 455 parents and carers.

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

- how well teachers match learning activities to the needs of all pupils and promote the acquisition of literacy skills
- the impact of the school's work to improve provision on the rate of pupils' progress in learning
- the impact of leadership and management on improving the consistency of classroom practice, particularly in relation to agreed strategies for literacy, the use of assessment in lessons and marking
- how well senior leaders use monitoring, review and evaluation to build on the improvements in attainment seen in 2010.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form. Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The large majority are from Pakistani heritage, with a wide range of other backgrounds represented. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. Around half are known to be eligible for free school meals. A similar proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average.

In January 2009 the school became part of a federation with Queensbridge School. Under these new arrangements the headteacher of Queensbridge School took over the leadership of Moseley School. The governing body was dissolved in 2010 and an interim executive board established. Some Queensbridge School pupils have joined Moseley School's sixth form. There is some limited collaboration with another local school sixth form, sharing provision for A-level courses. The school has specialist status in languages.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

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 pupils' attainment and progress, the use of assessment to support learning, attendance and the effectiveness of the sixth form.

Following a decline in pupils' achievements and a widening attainment gap in English and mathematics in 2008, the local authority took decisive action. Changes were made in leadership at the most senior level and in 2010 the governing body was replaced by an interim executive board. Only this year has the school emerged from a period of considerable turbulence involving changes to roles, responsibilities and staffing. In that time, the impact of school improvement work has been evident but variable.

The headteacher has communicated his ambition for the school clearly to staff, pupils and parents and carers. Together with the interim executive board and key staff he has worked to engage more effectively with parents and carers and to strengthen links between the school and local community. The large majority of staff who responded to the questionnaire support the new leadership arrangements for moving the school forward. The introduction of a new curriculum has enabled provision to better meet different learning needs and has been well received by pupils. That the very large majority of parents are satisfied with their children's experience of school represents a vote of confidence in the direction the headteacher provides.

Overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 rose in 2009. It rose again and more sharply in 2010 and, in English and mathematics, pupils made satisfactory progress. The gap between the school's results and the national average for these subjects narrowed further. However, well-targeted intervention for Year 11 pupils, rather than consistently strong teaching across a range of subjects, made the biggest contribution to this improving picture. Outstanding and good teaching is set against too much satisfactory practice that does not reflect agreed strategies to support learning. Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, the use of assessment is inadequate and too often this leads to satisfactory rather than good or better progress. Actions taken by senior leaders have improved teaching but have not reduced the variability in use of assessment quality quickly enough since the last inspection.

The focus on improvement in the main school has been a priority and a similar focus has not yet been extended to the sixth form where inadequate provision and outcomes have still to be robustly tackled.

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The school makes the most of its tired and sprawling accommodation. Staff and pupils alike eagerly await the planned and much needed new school building. Good relationships in classrooms underpin a cohesive school community where pupils feel safe and know that adults care about their well-being. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils have a clear sense of social responsibility. They value their friendships and are respectful of individual differences. Attendance is stubbornly low and too many pupils are late at the start of the school day. The competing demands of school improvement, planning for major building work and ongoing personnel issues stretch the under-resourced senior team. The headteacher, interim executive board and many staff are under no illusion about the journey that lies ahead. Together they demonstrate both the capacity and resolve to build on recent improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the management of teaching and learning so that pupils' progress improves quickly and securely and recent improvement is sustained by:
 - taking action that is more effective in developing teachers' skills in the use of strategies to check on pupils' understanding and progress throughout the lesson
 - taking action that is more effective in developing teachers' skills in the use of assessment information to match learning activities more precisely to individual need
 - making more effective use of the outstanding and good practice that is present in the school
 - ensuring that all teachers comply with the school's expectations around planning, marking, the use of assessment and support for literacy.
- Improve the effectiveness of the sixth form by:
 - producing a coherent plan for the systematic improvement of provision and outcomes that is underpinned by measurable success criteria
 - increasing the emphasis on developing students' skills for independent study and their literacy skills so that this becomes a consistent feature throughout sixth form teaching
 - ensuring that all students have appropriate entry requirements to succeed on AS and A-level courses and, where these are borderline, ensuring robust learning support is in place
 - strengthening partnership working in order to improve teaching as well as provision
 - encouraging all students to use non-lesson time productively.
- Improve attendance and punctuality by:
 - establishing measurable success criteria against which the impact of sharply focused actions to improve attendance can be gauged at regular intervals

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- ensuring that all staff make full use of the school's lesson score system to enhance other actions being taken to improve attendance and punctuality
- raising expectations of punctuality at the start of the school day and tackling lateness to school more robustly
- working with students and parents to stress the link between attendance and academic success.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

The proportion of pupils attaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was substantially higher in 2010 than at the time of the last inspection. Attainment has improved fastest in English and mathematics where the school has focused considerable intervention and particularly to support Year 11 students at the C/D grade borderline. Compared to most secondary schools a larger than average proportion gained a qualification in a modern foreign language. The pattern of attainment between subjects, and sometimes between different courses in the same subject, varies too widely reflecting the uneven quality of teaching. In the best lessons inspectors observed skilful checks on progress to consolidate learning and ensure that the meanings of new words and technical language were clearly understood. In these lessons pupils made good gains. In others, insufficient focus on developing literacy skills and the setting of the same learning tasks for all, irrespective of ability, led to satisfactory and sometimes inadequate progress. Overall, all groups of pupils make satisfactory, rather than the consistently good progress that is necessary to counter a backlog of low attainment. The weak basic skills of many pupils limit the potential of the exciting new curriculum to raise attainment quickly across all year groups.

Pupils have a good sense of community. They make a good contribution to the day-to-day life of their school and opportunities for them to participate in the local community are increasing. Experiences of life further afield are developing well, for example, through residential visits to the refurbished school cottage in Wales and international trips. Pupils have a good awareness of cultures and beliefs other than their own. Satisfactory behaviour and generally good relationships contribute to an atmosphere conducive to learning. Occasionally, when teaching fails to engage them, the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils disrupts learning. Most pupils say that they enjoy school and feel safe and included. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle promoted by physical exercise and many choose healthy school meals. Inspectors observed pupils socialising well together. Their moral and spiritual development is satisfactory.

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	4
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	3
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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory but varies widely in quality as does marking. Teachers display good subject knowledge and in the majority of lessons ensure that pupils are engaged throughout and resources are used adequately. Overall teaching is not strong enough to promote consistently good progress in learning because the use of assessment in lessons is inadequate. It is this element of practice that diminishes the impact of those other stronger elements of teaching. Inspectors observed some outstanding teaching in English and mathematics, but also some that was inadequate in both these subjects. Most of the science teaching observed by inspectors was satisfactory but uninspiring. In the best lessons teachers' planning takes account of the different points pupils are at in their learning and literacy, and activities are pitched accordingly. Weaker teaching often reflects the converse of these strengths and is overly concerned with delivering the lesson rather than assessing its impact on pupils' learning. Inconsistent use of the agreed literacy strategy is a shortcoming.

The Year 7 Enterprise curriculum is smoothing younger pupils' transition to secondary school and promoting their enjoyment of learning. This new provision reflects the impact and benefit of partnership and the strongest aspects of care, guidance and support. Pupils told inspectors that they value the care they receive and are positive about the new pastoral support arrangements. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the new vocational qualifications which are helping to improve achievement and personalise study pathways. The language specialism provides a good range of options and community languages have a healthy uptake. Provision has been thoughtfully structured to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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The lesson scoring system, when used consistently, helps pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and punctuality. The wider curriculum provides for satisfactory spiritual and moral development. Good opportunities for social and cultural development are provided through enrichment activities. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. The importance of community is emphasised through the good range of opportunities to participate in school life and increasingly in the local community and beyond.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

The most significant impact of partnership working has been to provide the energy and vision needed to drive school improvement and narrow the attainment gap. The school's self-assessment is broadly accurate and weaknesses as well as strengths are clearly recognised. The headteacher challenges unsatisfactory performance and some staff have moved on. Systems for tracking the progress of different groups of pupils are developing in their effectiveness as tools to inform senior and middle leaders of where their efforts are making a difference or where further work is required. This is helping promote equality of access to a suitable education and raise attainment. The exception is the sixth form. Here, the school recognises it has given insufficient attention to systematic improvement. This has not been a priority and here more could be made of partnership working. The interim executive board is providing satisfactory governance. It is appropriately involved in evaluation and strategic planning.

Improvements to teaching quality have not been extended sufficiently across the school. Leaders and managers have not been rigorous in ensuring all staff comply with the literacy strategy and marking policy and, where they do not, offering effective support or robust challenge as appropriate. Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. The school has been thoughtful in its use of international links to give pupils' a good appreciation of cultures different to their own. The headteacher and the interim executive board recognise the need to engage the local community more productively and are taking energetic and appropriate steps to do so. New posts have been agreed to strengthen the impact of partnership with parents and carers on pupils' attendance and punctuality, and to provide additional capacity to the small senior leadership team.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Sixth form

Teaching in the sixth form does not support students' learning needs well enough. Lessons often take a 'one-size-fits-all' approach that does not adequately meet students' differing needs. For example, inspectors observed a student who was predicted a higher grade doing the same work as another student with weak skills in English and was clearly struggling. In another lesson, the teacher talked for most of the time, rarely checking what the students were learning. Planning gives insufficient emphasis to developing skills for independent learning. A consistent and concerted approach to improving levels of literacy is absent. Some students do achieve well and in 2010 over 20 students gained places in higher education, but too many missed their targets, were unclassified in examinations, or repeated the same courses and modules. A few courses enable students to achieve well, but this is in stark contrast to others. Some weak teaching and a mismatch between course demands and students' skills and abilities result in outcomes that overall are inadequate.

Provision is more successful in supporting students' personal development. Students have suitable opportunities to take responsibility for example, as head boy and head girl, or as members of the prefect team. They enjoy sixth form life and socialising with their friends, sometimes at the expense of more productive use of their time. Sixth form students who spoke with inspectors were confident young people who relate well to each other and adults. Attendance is satisfactory. Students value the support they receive with applications and value the time teachers give outside lessons. The absence of a robust development plan is an obstacle to improving the effectiveness and value for money of the sixth form.

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

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	4
The quality of provision in the sixth form	4
Leadership and management of the sixth form	4

Views of parents and carers

The return rate of questionnaires was much higher than is typically found in secondary schools. The very large majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire are happy with their children's experience of school and say that their children enjoy school and are safe there. A similar proportion consider that the school is effectively led and managed. A few parents or carers consider that the school takes insufficient account of their concerns and does not keep them well informed of school matters. Inspectors found that the school and the interim executive board have taken steps to strengthen links with the local community, and especially with parents and carers. Inspectors followed up a few concerns about health and safety and found that the school carries out necessary risk assessments and acts appropriately on the findings. Inspection evidence supports the view that children do have a long way to walk to and from lessons throughout the day. The new school will be more compact and so remove these difficulties. A few concerns were raised about behaviour. During the inspection inspectors found this to be satisfactory. A few parents or carers express concerns about their children's progress. Inspectors found progress to be satisfactory rather than good because of the variable quality of teaching.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Moseley School A Language College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 455 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1392 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	166	36	256	56	25	5	5	1
The school keeps my child safe	166	36	259	57	27	6	2	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	201	44	211	46	32	7	8	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	137	30	270	59	39	9	8	2
The teaching is good at this school	139	31	277	61	27	6	8	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	127	28	249	55	64	14	10	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	105	23	267	59	56	12	17	4
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)	162	36	244	54	28	6	6	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	109	24	271	60	54	12	8	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	143	31	241	53	54	12	8	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	91	20	267	59	70	15	8	2
The school is led and managed effectively	112	25	288	63	40	9	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	184	40	227	50	29	6	9	2

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moseley School A Language College, Birmingham, B13 9LR

I write to thank you for your helpful contributions to the inspection of your school. Most of you told us you enjoy school and value your relationships with teachers and the quality of care you receive. We found your school to be a harmonious and friendly community. There have been some improvements since Mr Boyes took over as headteacher. You have a good choice of courses with the potential to meet your needs and interests, and good opportunities to participate in school life. Your behaviour is satisfactory and most of you are polite to adults and visitors.

However, we also found that your academic achievements, though improving in some areas, are not all as good as they should be because of the variable quality of teaching. Not enough teaching is outstanding or good to help you make swift progress so that all of you achieve as well as you can. Attendance is below average overall and too many of you are late to school. The sixth form makes satisfactory provision to support students' personal development but is inadequate in supporting academic achievements because success rates on courses vary too much. To make sure the necessary changes happen we have given the school a 'notice to improve'. We have asked school leaders to build further on the improvements they have made in the last two years by:

- strengthening the management of teaching so that all teachers use strategies to help you make good progress and develop the important literacy skills that you need to succeed in further education, employment and training
- producing a plan to improve the sixth form that will: ensure all students receive good support to develop skills in literacy and independent learning; ensure that all students have the right qualifications to succeed on AS and A-level courses; encourage everyone to use non-lesson time productively
- improving attendance and punctuality by working more closely with some of you and your families and by tracking everyone's attendance carefully.

Inspectors will visit again to check on progress. You can all help to make these improvements by taking responsibility for your own regular attendance and punctuality. Remember, employers and college and university admissions officers look at such things very carefully.

Yours sincerely

Cathryn Kirby

Her Majesty's Inspector

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