

Carr Manor High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108059
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	324698
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Jan Bennett 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
Number on roll	
School (total)	737
Sixth form	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kinnon North
Headteacher	Mr S Flowers
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2005
School address	Carr Manor Road Leeds West Yorkshire LS17 5DJ
Telephone number	0113 3368400
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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

Carr Manor is a smaller than average school that attracts pupils from a wide area and over half of its pupils are from economically disadvantaged parts of the city. Almost a third, more than twice the national average, are eligible for free school meals. Around 40% of pupils are White British and the remainder are from a broad range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. A third of pupils do not speak English as their first language and 37 languages are spoken in the school. An increasing number of pupils are asylum seekers or refugees and around 10% each year join the school part way through the year. Many of these pupils are new to this country or have been excluded from their previous school. More than half have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of children in public care attending the school varies; currently there are 13. The school moved to new purpose-built accommodation in 2006 and it became a Specialist Sports College in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Carr Manor is a good school with outstanding features, with an inspirational headteacher. Staff and pupils are very optimistic about the future of the school and proud of its recent achievements. The new building and improving examination results have increased local confidence in the school and a growing number of local parents/carers are sending their children to Carr Manor. The new school building provides a very attractive and conducive learning environment but there are many other factors that have contributed to the rapid improvement of the school. As one pupil observed, 'It's not just the building -you wouldn't believe how everything has got so much better in the last two or three years'. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and a clear vision for the school and is supported by a capable team of senior and middle managers. Teaching and non-teaching staff work together extremely well. There is a very positive atmosphere in school and optimism and confidence amongst staff and pupils. The vast majority of parents/carers are very strongly supportive of the school. Pupils make good progress in their learning and GCSE pass rates have improved considerably in the last two years. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are still lower than average, but are rising at a faster rate than the national trend. The school works hard to ensure that pupils gain qualifications and skills that will equip them well for the future and the number of pupils leaving Carr Manor who do not go on to further education, training or employment has fallen markedly. The personal development and well-being of pupils is good and some aspects are outstanding. Pupils from very different cultures and backgrounds work well together and show respect for each other. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good and pupils report that there is virtually no bullying or racism. The Inclusion Team play a key role in maintaining the calm and purposeful way that the school operates throughout the day. The quality of teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and are good. Teachers encourage pupils to take more responsibility for their learning and to assess the quality of their own work and that of their peers. In a small number of lessons, however, the work and activities set are not stretching pupils sufficiently. Pupils are set challenging targets and these are monitored closely, which is helping to drive up standards. Changes to the curriculum have also contributed to the improving pass rates. The Key Stage 4 curriculum has been enhanced to include more work-related and vocational courses that are engaging pupils and enabling them to make better progress. Improvements have been made to the Year 7 curriculum to accelerate the progress made in Key Stage 3. The school has made a good start in promoting the newly awarded specialist status and extending its range of sports provision. The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils, particularly those that are troubled and vulnerable. The innovative coaching system provides stability and guidance, particularly to pupils with little support at home. Both teachers and non-teachers act as coaches, enabling the school to support and guide pupils in small 'family groups'. A typical comment was, 'My coaching group is my family and I turn to them for help'. The headteacher, governors and managers know the school very well. Their analysis of its strengths and weaknesses is very accurate and they have made very rapid progress in implementing plans for improvement. Resources are very carefully managed and staff are deployed extremely well to provide maximum benefit to pupils. The school provides outstanding value for money and has an outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Post 16 provision is being transformed across the city and moving towards collaborative provision with local schools and colleges working together to offer a range of programmes across the various institutions. Up to the end of last Year, the sixth form curriculum at Carr Manor included both AS level and vocational courses, but the school is now offering just one vocational course, in sports studies at advanced level. This course provides a firm platform to attract increasing numbers of students in the future, but current numbers are very small. In the past, achievement was satisfactory on vocational courses, but students did not achieve as well on AS level courses. The personal development of sixth formers is satisfactory. They contribute to the school's coaching programme, assist with the Year 7 residential visit and gain additional qualifications through links with Leeds Metropolitan University. Sixth formers testify to the very high level of care and guidance that the school provides and there is a strong community ethos. The school recognizes the need to broaden the curriculum and increase numbers.

What the school should do to improve further

- Broaden the curriculum and opportunities for enrichment in the sixth form
- Ensure that lessons include activities that stretch and challenge pupils of all abilities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The average attainment of pupils entering the school at the start of Year 7 varies but is generally lower than average, especially in English. In addition, a high proportion of pupils join the school after the start of Year 7, over a quarter of pupils in some year groups and many do not speak English as their first language. Standards reached at the end of Key Stage 4 are below the national average, but they are rising quickly and closing the gap. The proportion of pupil's achieving at least five higher grade GCSE passes increased to 43% in 2007 from 29% in the previous year. The provisional results for 2008 show further improvement. Over 40% of pupils achieved Level 2 qualifications in both literacy and numeracy this year which represents a significant improvement on previous years. Standards in Key Stage 3 are also rising but more steadily. Achievement has been good for the past two years with pupils making much better progress than similar pupils in other schools. School data that tracks pupils' progress have proved to be accurate and suggest that the improving trend is set to continue. A significant number of pupils have reached challenging targets ahead of schedule and are being encouraged to aim even higher. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities attain standards that are in line with similar pupils nationally and the same is true for pupils for whom English is not their first language. None of the different ethnic groups represented in school under-achieves.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being receives an initial boost from a 3 day residential early in Year 7, which promotes healthy living as well as fostering good inter-personal relationships. Pupils speak very highly of the experience and its benefits. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle is outstanding throughout the school. Pupils have more than two hours of physical education each week. There is good participation in the wide range of sporting activities available and the re-scheduled school day means that pupils take lunch in the refectory where

healthy meals are the only option. Good use is made of the many different cultures represented in school and pupils celebrate diversity through 'One World Day', which is an event that they remember with pleasure and enjoy. Speakers representing different religious groups are regular visitors. Pupils say that there is no racism in the school and they are encouraged to reflect on their own morals and beliefs in assemblies, religious studies lessons and as part of the personal effectiveness programme. Pupils from different cultures, races and year groups work and socialise very well together showing respect for one another. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. The new building has a range of security features, including CCTV cameras and magnetic locks, but it is the highly visible staff presence that pupils find most reassuring. They say there is virtually no bullying and any rare incidents are very firmly dealt with. Older pupils help by keeping a watchful eye on younger members of their coaching group. The school council assembly is gathering momentum and has already brought about a number of changes particularly in the refectory. It has representatives on the Leeds Youth Council. Attendance has improved significantly and remains a focus of attention for the school. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They raise money for local, national and international causes and they do valuable work in the community. Pupils are leaving school with better qualifications than previously, especially in literacy and numeracy and they have a good understanding of the world of work and the range of post 16 opportunities available. However, there is scope for their financial and enterprise skills to be developed further.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well structured; they start promptly with a starter activity and learning is checked and consolidated in a plenary session at the end. Most teachers plan a variety of activities to engage pupils and good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning. However, not all lessons are planned carefully enough to make certain that everyone in the class is sufficiently stretched. Most teachers have good behaviour and classroom management skills that ensure lessons run smoothly and pupils learn well. Many teachers are using assessment well to develop pupils' critical skills and to help them find ways to improve their work. The quality of teachers' questions is variable. Most teachers use very effective questions to probe understanding, to challenge and to focus pupils' attention, but in a minority of lessons questions are undirected and not everyone hears or benefits from the answer. The system for managers to observe lessons is effectively linked to staff development and sharing good practice.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been strengthened over recent years and is good in the main school. Weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and the school provides a broad curriculum which meets statutory requirements. Improvements have been carefully planned and skilfully tailored to the needs of pupils. The school day has been imaginatively re-scheduled to create a sixth period used for enrichment activities, including additional GCSE subjects. A flexible and integrated curriculum has been introduced in Year 7 that is helping pupils to cope with the change from Key Stage 2 to 3, and this continues into Year 8 where necessary. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is closely matched to the range of pupils' abilities and interests. Care has been taken to choose examination boards offering courses that

are matched closely to pupils' learning styles and needs. Effective partnerships enable the school to offer a very good choice of vocational subjects plus opportunities to work at an appropriate pace and level. The recently awarded specialist status is leading to fresh curriculum developments and the school already plays a leading role in promoting physical education in local schools. Good provision is made for pupils' personal development, including educational visits, and there is a very wide range of clubs and activities on offer at lunchtime and after school. The small number of students in the sixth form means that choice and opportunities for enrichment are currently restricted.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The coaching system works extremely well and provides stability and very effective support. Small groups enable coaches to get to know pupils and their families very well. Pupils, parents/carers praise coaches very highly and value the advice and practical support they give, sometimes outside school hours. Year 7 pupils join the school from over 20 primary schools and the transition arrangements are extremely well planned enabling pupils to settle very quickly. Pupils joining the school mid-term are given very good initial help and soon feel part of the school. The support for pupils who are vulnerable or troubled and those newly arrived in this country is exceptional. Children in public care receive exemplary support. Academic guidance is very strong. Target setting and monitoring systems are robust. Pupils are set challenging but appropriate individual targets and their progress is checked closely by managers, teachers and coaches. Managers also set targets for their teams and monitor progress by class and by subject regularly, enabling them to take remedial action quickly. The progress that pupils make against their individual targets is reviewed twice per term and both coaches and parents/carers receive reports. Parents/carers are invited to school twice a year to meet coaches and there is also an annual parents/carers evening. A team of pupil development managers identifies vulnerable pupils and provides targeted support. They work preventatively and have made a key contribution to the significant reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions by focusing on the successful reintegration of pupils back into mainstream lessons. The school checks on health and safety issues effectively and all the necessary procedures are in place for safeguarding pupils' welfare. There is very good programme of careers education and work-related learning. The school works closely with local colleges and sixth forms encouraging its pupils to stay in education or training and helping to ease their transition from school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has spearheaded the transformation of the school by providing a clear vision and a range of innovative strategies that have successfully improved the quality of provision, improved examination results and attracted many more pupils to the school. Senior leaders give very clear direction and have created a common sense of purpose amongst staff. A strong and confident middle management team shares the vision and is playing a key role in raising achievement. All staff are committed to providing the best possible opportunities for pupils who say that they are constantly encouraged to do their best. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school is appropriately focusing on raising standards and achievement in Key

Stage 3 where there are strategies in place to improve pupils' literacy skills. The innovative use of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to provide coaching and guidance for pupils has strengthened the feeling of unity across the school. Community cohesion is outstanding and is a strong feature of the school's work. Skilled deployment of staff ensures they are highly visible around school, both in and out of lesson time, reassuring pupils, chivvying them along and nipping potential problems in the bud. Governors provide good support and are actively involved in the life of the school, holding it to account and acting as a critical friend to leaders at all levels. Through this strong and effective partnership, governors, leaders and staff work hard to provide the best they can for pupils and the wider community. The school is excellently placed to continue its improvement.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

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.

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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	IE ²
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	IE ²

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
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?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Carr Manor High School Specialist Sports College, Leeds, LS17 5DJ Thank you for your contribution to the recent inspection of your school. I enjoyed meeting you, seeing you at work and hearing your views. Carr Manor is a good and improving school of which you can be justifiably proud. Here is a summary of the findings which hopefully will be of interest to you.

- You make good overall progress in the main school and statistics show that the achievement of pupils who completed Key Stage 4 in 2007 was significantly better than that of pupils in other schools. Your GCSE results have improved considerably in the last two years. The targets you are set and the systems to check on your progress are strong.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons get off to a good start, they are managed well and they run very smoothly. I was pleased to see that you are encouraged to take more responsibility for your own learning. I have asked teachers to plan activities that are more closely matched to the full range of your abilities particularly to challenge and stretch you sufficiently.
- The curriculum is developing well and there is a good range of sports and clubs. For a small school, you have a very good choice of courses in Key Stage 4. The work-related and vocational courses that have been introduced are enabling many more of you to get worthwhile qualifications. The curriculum offered in the sixth form is very restricted at the moment but this is linked to the long term plans for north-east Leeds.
- You are prepared well for life when you leave school and almost everyone leaving the school continues with their education/training or finds employment. Your behaviour in and out of lessons is good and you treat each other with respect. You are actively involved in fund raising and we were very impressed that you reported virtually no bullying or racism in school.
- The care, guidance and support that you receive are outstanding. The support for those of you with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with family difficulties and those who are new to this country is excellent. We were very impressed with the coaching system and the quality of support that you receive from your coaches and each other. You have an outstanding headteacher and the school has improved tremendously in the last few years. There are plans to improve the school further and we hope that you will play your part in making Carr Manor even better. We would like to congratulate you on being part of such a good school and wish you well for the future.