

Lutterworth High School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	137115
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	385574
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Ian Middleton HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	728
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Pearce
Headteacher	Nora Parker
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ian Middleton	Her Majesty's Inspector
William Cassell	Additional inspector
Sally Lane	Additional inspector
Richard White	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors carried out observations of 43 part-lessons taught by 37 teachers. Meetings were held with students, representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, subject and progress leaders and representatives of the Lutterworth Area Schools Association (LASA). Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information, school policies and 225 questionnaires from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Lutterworth High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and became an academy in August 2011. Most students are White British and a below average proportion is from minority ethnic heritages. A few students are of Traveller heritage. The proportions of students identified with disabilities and those with special educational needs, and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs are well below average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is very small in relation to schools nationally.

The predecessor school met the current floor standard (the minimum standards expected by the government). In partnership with the local college the school was awarded specialist status in technology in 2008.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Lutterworth High School provides an outstanding quality of education. Students make excellent progress from above average starting points and leave very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Strong engagement with parents and carers and very good relationships with staff, enable students to feel safe and extremely well supported, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or whose disabilities or special educational needs make some aspects of learning difficult.
- Different groups of students progress equally well in order to meet challenging targets. The school’s actions to narrow the gaps between the performance of girls and boys have raised above-average standards further. The school is accurately focused on particular subjects where fewer boys still reach the higher levels.
- Students look forward to their lessons because teaching and learning in most are good or better. The effectiveness of teachers and support staff in promoting high standards of behaviour and academic performance is outstanding.
- Boys and girls apply very positive attitudes to their learning in and out of school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is impressive. In lessons students use leadership skills confidently and express enjoyment in learning openly, often mirroring the teacher’s enthusiasm.
- Students’ independence, attendance, punctuality, and literacy skills are particularly strong indicators of their preparation for future employability. These are recent areas that staff have addressed concertedly and collaboratively.
- The headteacher’s determination to create the conditions for students to flourish drives the school’s continuous improvement. This is exemplified well in the development of the learning environment, virtual and at school.
- The senior team is very well supported by a very effective governing body, subject and progress leaders sharply focused on the development of staff and students, and teaching and support staff who show a strong sense of loyalty to the school and pride in its students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning in lessons by ensuring that teachers and support staff enable students to:
 - develop and apply their strengths, including initiative and leadership, mathematical and communication skills, consistently well across subjects
 - make greater progress still where their standards are lower than in their other subjects or compared with other students, fully closing the gap between girls and boys.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students make excellent progress between Year 7 and Year 9 having attained above average results when tested at primary school. Cohesive partnerships with primary schools, parents and carers, and efficient use of assessment information, contribute to students' swift progress on starting at the school. Strategies to ease transition for all groups of students, including an 'e-buddy' scheme, are very effective. However, the small proportion of students at the school with disabilities or special educational needs progress most rapidly in their later stages. The progress of traveller students is also less consistent because attendance is lower than the above-average attendance sustained by other groups of students.

In most subjects students reach standards that are well above those achieved nationally. Over the past three years the proportion of students attaining the higher levels has increased for boys and girls in all subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Slightly more boys than girls attain the higher levels in mathematics and physical education, and results are similar in science and information and communications technology. Otherwise, girls outperform boys. Strategies to narrow the gap between boys and girls, for example through appealing subject matter or practical activities, have improved boys' performance. However, girls have responded well too so that in several subjects, including English, the gap is not yet fully closed.

Sustained progress in lessons combines with conscientious follow-up and lesson preparation by students, often involving independent use of the 'virtual' learning environment. Students are very keen to learn, attentive to teaching, alert to questions, and very active when working in pairs and in small groups. The whole school focus on literacy is proving very effective in developing confident readers. The use of different initiatives to promote reading skills was observed to be very effective. The school's current curriculum review is accurately focused on sharpening students' ability to develop and apply skills across subjects, including mathematical and communication skills. When students are given opportunities to lead aspects of the learning they show excellent organisational and presentation skills, for example in reporting back or demonstrating to others, but this excellent practice is not yet wholly consistent across subjects.

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Quality of teaching

The impact of teaching on students' progress and achievement is outstanding. The development and use of the virtual learning environment extends students' learning in the classroom very effectively. Records of observations made by the school concur with the inspection, and the views of students, parents and carers, that lessons are mostly good or better. Scrutiny of students' work and assessment records also indicate that the quality of teaching is consistent. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used well to give emphasis where appropriate to whole school curricular strategies. For example, students' plotting the 'flight path' of their progress graphically in mathematics or listening to and singing pentatonic compositions in music contribute to the focus on different forms of literacy across the curriculum. Students' work is regularly assessed and all are clear about how to improve their work further. Particularly in less academic subjects, baseline assessment early in Year 7 contributes to the accurate pitch of targets.

Staff support each other very well. Those who regularly teach outstanding lessons are working collaboratively to enrich the work of their colleagues.

The highly effective teaching observed was characterised by:

- a subject-specific learning objective expressed in straightforward language, followed up with examples that made the purpose of the learning clear
- the confidence to improvise, backed up by meticulous planning that showed clear strategies to challenge and support students' individual needs
- a range of stimuli, used selectively to actively engage students, for example the use of film or text thoughtfully chosen with students' interests in mind
- clear enjoyment in teaching and passion for the subject, evident in good humour and inspiring displays or demonstrations
- a brisk pace, driven by a busy sequence of activities that deepened students' learning or refined their skills, and maximised the use of homework
- suitably high expectations of students, individual work shared sensitively to inspire others and work in small groups managed skilfully to promote leadership skills and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The strong commitment of teachers and support staff to students' well-being ensures that expectations of their behaviour and safety are consistently very high. Inspectors experienced exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school. Almost all parents and carers that responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed, expressing very positive views about their children's safety and behaviour at the school. A few, nevertheless, thought that lessons were sometimes disrupted by poor behaviour. Discussions with students and school records, including the declining rate and more recent absence of any exclusions, indicate that poor behaviour is very rare. In all years, students considered the school's wide ranging anti-bullying and anti-racist initiatives highly effective and the systems for dealing with any occurrences

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clear. Inspectors found no evidence of bullying and evaluated students' understanding of different types of bullying as comprehensive.

Predominantly good teaching and intervention by support staff, fosters very positive behaviour and attitudes in lessons. Collaboration between pairs and groups of students is cohesive and considerate. Low incidence of immature behaviour in Year 7 is replaced by consistently responsible behaviour by Years 8 and 9. Students' personal development is reflected well in their conscientious approach to GCSE work in these years. Most teachers capitalise on students' increasingly mature attitudes to learning by expecting progressively more of students' lesson preparation and follow-up. Students shared the records they made of assessments and progress, their work in books, folders and their e-portfolio with great pride. However, the outstanding teaching went further by shifting the emphasis from teacher-led to student-led learning in lessons too, for example by enabling students to lead different activities.

Leadership and management

Senior and middle leaders look within and beyond the school to build strong capacity for continuous improvement. This is evident in judicious professional development and use of local and increasingly national networking. Partnerships with parents/carers, outside agencies and other schools before, during and after their time at Lutterworth High contribute significantly to students' strong sense of purpose. Gains in the development of students' knowledge, understanding and skills, or indications of underachievement are tracked continuously and followed up very efficiently and effectively to ensure equal opportunity for all. Initiatives developed with partner schools contribute well to a culture of long-term interest in students' achievement and well-being, for example, the tracking of students' GCSE and post-16 performance and the involvement of past students, now sixth formers, in academic mentoring. Specialist technology status has contributed very well to improvements since the last inspection, particularly where used to promote students' independence and strengthen partnerships with parents/ carers and other schools through shared use of digital communication.

The curriculum meets students' needs and interests very well, supported by enthusiastic views shared by different groups, particularly about times when cross-curricular competences are promoted through 'focus' days. The school is currently reviewing and redesigning the curriculum by taking account of feedback by students. School self-evaluation rightly judges students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development highly. Areas that could be stronger still, for example students' depth and breadth of understanding about cultural diversity, is already a focus of senior leaders in relation to curriculum review. Monitoring of teaching, learning and standards is rigorous and challenging; there is no room for complacency despite above-average and rising standards. Responses by staff to the inspection questionnaire indicate that leaders and managers have been mostly successful in developing a shared vision. The headteacher and governing body use their determination and expertise well to tap into any available resources that will help

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turn aspirations into a reality, evident in the school's recent status as an academy. The focus on teaching and its impact on learning remain paramount, evident for example in the very successful recruitment and development of trainee teachers as part of the Beauchamp training partnership. The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met. Governors' active involvement in challenging and supporting the school is a strength. So too is the increasing involvement of students, for example through the development of the 'Insted' team of students who observe, analyse and evaluate the quality of learning.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Lutterworth High School, Lutterworth, LE17 4QH

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school on 18 and 19 January, I would like to thank you for the welcome you gave us. We valued the opportunity to share your achievements and talk to you in discussion groups and lessons. This letter is to let you know what our conclusions are following the inspection.

Your school is outstanding and meets your needs exceptionally well. We particularly liked these features.

- You make very good progress in response to high levels of challenge and leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of your education.
- Your relationships with staff are very good and together with close involvement of your parents and carers, this enables all of you to feel safe and supported.
- You show very positive attitudes to learning in lessons, through your conscientious homework and very good attendance.
- Your lessons are taught very well and an increasing number are outstanding. The very best lessons show high levels of enjoyment by staff and students.
- You show high levels of responsibility and respect for the views and feelings of others in and out of the classroom. Some of you show leadership well too.
- Your school has continued to improve. For example, the development of the 'virtual learning environment' and school environment enriches your learning.
- You use your literacy skills well in different subjects and the school has good plans to promote more cross-curricular work, which students we spoke to told us they like.
- Your teachers have been working hard to make sure that boys and girls do equally well, including students with disabilities or special educational needs.

We have asked the school to make even more teaching and learning outstanding by:

- increasing opportunities for you to develop and apply skills, including leadership
- closing any gaps where your achievements are lower in particular subjects, or lower than those of other students.

The inspection team wish you well for your continued enjoyment and success.

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton
Her Majesty's Inspector

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