

Lyng Hall School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103733
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	376958
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2012
Lead inspector	David Martin HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	703
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Horton
Headteacher	Paul Green
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
School address	Blackberry Lane Coventry CV2 3JS
Telephone number	024 7672 4960
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Martin

Her Majesty's Inspector

Philip Drabble

Additional inspector

Carol Worthington

Additional inspector

Richard White

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 32 lessons taught by 31 members of staff, of which four were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to see other aspects of the school's work, such as support sessions, registration, an assembly and 'class band' music activities. Meetings were held with three groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. 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 a number of documents, including the raising attainment plan (RAP), key policy documents including those related to keeping students safe, and minutes of the governing body. Also, they analysed 21 questionnaires from parents and carers and others completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

Lyng Hall is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is above average. Students are drawn from a rich variety of backgrounds. Over half of the students are White British, but there are significant proportions from Indian, Pakistani and more recently also from African heritages.

Around a third of students speak English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools, with 38 languages represented. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above average, as is the percentage with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of students entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is far higher than in most schools. The school meets the current floor standard.

The school has specialised in sports since 2005 and has been a Trust school since 2008. The school has significantly extended its community programme in the last three years. Since the previous inspection, the number of students in the sixth form has almost trebled. The school has achieved the Achievement for All Quality Mark and is a Careers Academy.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Lyng Hall is a good school, with a good sixth form. It has improved considerably since the last inspection. Students in the main school attain in line with national averages from very low starting points. Their progress is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Standards in the sixth form are broadly average, with students making expected and often good progress.
- A particular strength of the school is that adults work strategically with students and their parents and carers to overcome any difficulties that they may have. Adults in school successfully remove barriers to attendance, learning or being fully included within the school community. Students feel safe and procedures to keep them safe are good.
- Teaching has improved considerably and is mostly good. There are many examples of good and outstanding teaching. Middle leaders play a key role in supporting areas that are less strong, and teachers are keen to develop their practice. Teaching and subject leadership in science is currently less strong.
- Students generally behave very well, both in classrooms and around the school. Some do present challenges at times, but the school has effective systems to intervene and to support them. The school community is diverse and harmonious, with students from a range of backgrounds mixing very well. This is due to the consistent promotion of tolerance, respect and care for each other. Attendance is above average and continues to improve strongly. Exclusion of any sort is extremely rare, with no recent permanent exclusions.
- The headteacher, members of the governing body and the Trust have a clear vision for the school as an inclusive, achieving community. Members of the governing body are supportive and know the schools' strengths and weaknesses, but they do not gather enough first-hand evidence to inform their evaluations of the school's work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision and outcomes in science so that they are in line with those found in other subjects in the school by July 2013 through:
 - improving the overall quality of teaching in the department, with particular attention to pace, challenge, subject knowledge and classroom management
 - strengthening the leadership of the subject area through coaching
 - raising attainment in GCSE courses.
- Increase the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - revising and strengthening existing arrangements and protocols for visits to the school
 - gaining and recording more first-hand evidence to use when holding the school to account.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students generally make good progress in their learning. Lessons are conducted at a lively pace and students are active partners in learning. Students check their own understanding of what is being taught, and use this information to correct mistakes or improve their work. Students are usually very well engaged in lessons, and required to work cooperatively in pairs and groups. They also contribute very well in class through discussion and answering questions. Achievement was not as strong in some classrooms, particularly in science, where the same successful learning strategies were not so well embedded.

The school works effectively to remove barriers to learning, particularly for the more vulnerable, those who speak English as an additional language, and for disabled students and those with special educational needs. As a result, all identified groups within the school make at least as good progress as their peers, and some better. This is particularly true of students who receive additional support for identified learning difficulties or who join the school other than at the usual times.

From very low starting points, students overall attain broadly average standards by the time they leave school. A number of parents and carers commented very positively on the effectiveness of school support in helping students to achieve. This is reflected in the inspection findings.

Sixth form students spoke very warmly about the aspirations that the school has for their achievement. They are aware that, from often low starting points, they are making increasingly good progress as courses become better matched to their needs and aspirations. Around 30 students went on to university courses last year; for the great majority they were the first members of their family to access higher education.

Quality of teaching

Students, parents and carers were keen to express the view that teaching has improved significantly over the last three years, and that lessons have become more interesting, varied and relevant. These views are reflected in the inspection findings and are due to a very coherent training strategy within the school. Teachers understand the need to engage students of all abilities, and plan and deliver lessons that have a range of activities and learning styles. Questioning, an area identified for improvement at the last inspection, is much improved.

In most lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge, inspiring confidence in their students. The learning aims are made clear, and students are encouraged to track their own progress. Teachers carefully assess students' progress during lessons, adjusting the lesson from the feedback they receive. Marking is good, with teachers offering useful advice on how work can be improved and students responding by correcting errors. Homework is regularly set and is varied and interesting.

The school's foundation studies programme very effectively supports students who find learning more difficult. This support often enables students to return to mainstream classrooms successfully after a relatively short time. Because of the emphasis on tolerance and respect, returning students are quickly integrated and are successful in their studies. Students are mutually supportive and individuals feel confident to ask questions. As an example, students in a foundation studies group spontaneously helped each other to use a thesaurus and dictionaries to improve their writing. There is a strong focus on literacy in foundation studies and in other support. It is the school's success in overcoming identified literacy weaknesses that helps all students to make such good progress.

In the minority of lessons where teaching is weaker, there is not such a strong pace to lessons, or learning tasks are insufficiently well matched to the different abilities of students. As a consequence, concentration was not maintained and there was some off-task behaviour.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in classrooms and around the school during the inspection was good. It was directly affected by the quality of teaching. Where teachers planned and used interesting, engaging and suitably challenging tasks, students were very cooperative partners. Good use was made of praise and reward, and students responded very well to this. The school code of conduct is simple and clear. It is built on principles of being polite, punctual, hardworking, considerate and well behaved. The school needs to apply few sanctions, but invests time in explaining why poor behaviour causes a problem, and what can be done to resolve it. Staff model considerate behaviour and respond calmly and effectively when problems arise. Records show that, as a result of this, there are few instances of poor behaviour; these are carefully monitored and appropriate action taken to ensure they are not repeated.

Parents and students were very positive about the way that the school handles behavioural issues. They were aware that there was some poor behaviour at times but expressed confidence that staff would deal with the issues effectively.

The team of 15 associate teachers work with students and families very effectively to make positive connections, so that students can access the many opportunities available in the school. The school has extensive partnerships with a wide range of agencies, and acts as a 'hub' school in Coventry for other schools in 'achievement for all' programmes. This has had a very positive impact on attendance, which was an area for improvement at the last inspection. Attendance has risen steadily to above the national average, with few students persistently absent. Attendance is carefully monitored for all groups and has improved strongly for potentially more vulnerable students.

The school's procedures for keeping students safe are robust and comprehensive. A recent external health and safety audit was very positive about the way that practices were embedded on a day-to-day basis. Parents and students overwhelmingly responded positively through questionnaires in saying that students felt safe. Students have a good understanding of the risks they face in and around the school, and demonstrate a clear understanding of unsafe situations and how to respond to these. Students recognise different types of bullying, including those that employ new technologies or are prejudice-based, and know how to prevent these. School records indicate that such incidents are few and that students are encouraged to discuss and resolve disagreements.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, members of the governing body and the Trust have an unswerving commitment to providing an education for students that overcomes barriers to learning and promotes the widest possible opportunities for personal development. The school has been notably successful in doing so, and has been recognised as a leader at local and national level. This success is based on a clear, precise planning process in the RAP that identifies a few key priorities, decides what actions are to be taken by whom, and regularly monitors and evaluates the progress made against its objectives. These findings are regularly reported to governors, providing them with a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, this is not sufficiently supported by first-hand evidence from visits. Safeguarding arrangements are very strong and contribute well to a safe and stable community.

All staff enthusiastically subscribe to the aims that the school is pursuing. They understand that there are several key aspects of the school that, interlinked, create success. They work together to improve teaching, with stronger directors of learning supporting work in less effective departments. Provision is very well mapped for students so that they can succeed in their studies because courses and additional activities meet their needs and inspire them to keep learning. These strands are skilfully managed by an able team of senior leaders, well supported by a growing number of highly skilled middle leaders and managers.

Prospective sixth form students are increasingly consulted about preferences, and are carefully guided on to suitable programmes of study. There are arrangements with other local schools to widen the options available at post-16. The school offers a broad range of enrichment activities and experiences of a sporting and cultural nature, and a range of less traditional subjects is offered through the local college.

Students have wide opportunities as sports ambassadors, working with local primary schools and in the community. Students raise money for charities, are engaged in a range of volunteering activities, and the school supports a school in Uganda. This contributes to students being respectful, tolerant and very well prepared for life in a multicultural society. Any form of discrimination in the school is dealt with through reconciliation and such incidents are rare. The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is therefore outstanding, with equality of opportunity central to school life.

The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection and has resolved any shortcomings identified at that time. It is already aware of and working to improve weaknesses in science and has a good capacity to make further improvements in the future.

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.



3 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Lyng Hall School, Coventry, CV2 3JS

I would like to thank you for your contribution to the recent inspection. Watching you at work and talking to some of you in more depth gave us the strong impression that you felt very positive about your school. The great majority of students who filled in the questionnaire were equally positive. A few of you had some concerns about bullying and behaviour, but most felt that the school dealt with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Inspectors agree that Lyng Hall is a good school. Here are some of the many positive features that we noted.

- You make good progress in your work and this is reflected by examination results that are around average but improving every year.
- Adults work very effectively with those students who may find school more difficult, often working closely with parents and carers to help students to achieve.
- Teaching is mainly good and you learn a lot in most lessons.
- You behave with respect, tolerance and care towards other students, and your behaviour is usually good.
- The adults who lead your school are determined to give you every opportunity to grow, develop and learn, both in the classroom and in an impressive range of exciting additional activities.
- The growing sixth form is increasingly successful, with many students now able to take up courses at university when they leave.

Inspectors found that teaching in science was not as good as seen elsewhere in the school. The headteacher is aware of this and has already taken steps to improve the situation. We have asked him to make sure that this happens as a matter of urgency, as it is an important subject for you all. We have also asked members of the governing body to find out more about school life for themselves.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard with the adults at the school and be successful in the future when you move on to the next stage of your lives.

Yours sincerely

David Martin
Her Majesty's Inspector

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