

Chilwell School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122854
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	343779
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Roger Whittaker

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1081
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geof Bagley
Headteacher	Ian Brierly
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons, observed 29 teachers and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, the School Improvement Partner, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement plan, department reviews, minutes of governing body meetings and monitoring data in relation to students' progress and the quality of teaching. Inspectors also took account of 202 parental questionnaires, 183 students questionnaires and 42 staff questionnaires received.

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

- the evidence to support the school's judgement that there has been improved outcomes for all students
- the consistency of leadership and management, at all levels, in addressing the need to raise standards
- the improvements in the sixth form provision in order to meet the needs and aspirations of all students in preparing them for the next stage of education, training and work
- the policies and systems to check whether they meet all government requirements.

Information about the school

Chilwell is an above average sized comprehensive school with specialist status in the arts, mathematics and computing. Most students are of White British heritage but, since the last inspection, the school has continued to become more diverse in its nature. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, is below average. The school was given a notice to improve at the last inspection and has experienced a period of significant changes both in staffing at middle management and teacher level, together with a restructuring of the senior management team in the past year.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Strong senior leadership is ensuring that well thought-out strategies for improvement are having a positive impact on provision and, in turn, on outcomes for students at Chilwell School. The satisfactory governance has played a major role in supporting the head teacher and senior staff in implementing these strategies. However, the governing body is not yet holding the school to account for its actions and outcomes. The good curriculum and care, guidance and support ensure that the needs of all students are better met than at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, attainment, which was below national averages in 2008, has improved so that results in 2010 were above national averages overall and are expected to improve for present Year 11 students. This is evident in the progress made in many lessons and through the school's accurate tracking data. The attainment of students at the end of Year 13 is broadly in line with national averages. However, retention rates from Year 12 to Year 13 are too low.

The school has good capacity not only to sustain current levels of performance but also to improve even further because it has a good track record of improvements that the school leaders have brought about. These include addressing those areas causing the inadequate progress identified at the last inspection, and meeting and exceeding the challenging targets the school has set for itself. Most staff understand fully what the school is striving to achieve and are committed to these goals. The school has good self-evaluation procedures in place, and is increasingly improving the rigour of monitoring and evaluation at department levels. All monitoring and evaluation policies are in place and meet requirements.

The school has a good range of effective partnerships with feeder schools, businesses and the local community. Despite the significant improvements that have been made, areas of inconsistency remain in a few areas. The school has accurately identified these and has set them as priorities in its improvement plan. There are variations in attainment and progress across subjects. This is because, although teaching has improved, there remain some inconsistencies in the use of assessment to support learning and the extent to which learning activities are matched to students' capabilities. Strong tracking of students in danger of underachieving has been used to target intervention strategies effectively. However, this has been managed and delivered by senior leaders and therefore has not been the responsibility of middle leaders at department level. A minority of parents and carers feel that the school does not engage sufficiently with them so that they can support their children's learning and in order to take account of their views about how the school is run.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Remove remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that the majority of lessons are good and better by:
 - using assessment data to plan lessons where outcomes are linked to individual student needs
 - planning activities which are creative and enable students to develop their independent learning skills
 - ensuring that all students know what they can do well and how to improve in lessons.
- Engage parents and carers more effectively so that they are able to:
 - take an active part in supporting their children's learning
 - feel confident that their views are taken account of when decisions are made about the running of the school.
- Improve the number of sixth form students who continue their education from Year 12 to Year 13
- Transfer the management responsibility for tracking and intervention strategies from the senior leadership team to middle managers at department level.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students join the school with broadly average attainment. By the time they leave, the majority have attainment which is above the national average. However, in 2008 there was a decline in standards, which began in the previous year, and results for students were significantly below national averages especially in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The recently appointed headteacher and restructured senior leadership team were quick to deal with the situation and consequently, improve the learning and progress of students. The present Year 11 students are on track to continue this improvement and achieve the school's challenging targets for five A* to C grades including English and mathematics and so achieve well above national averages. The results for ICT in 2010 also improved significantly. The progress of individual students, including students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups, is in line with the overall rates of progress.

Students' attitudes to learning and their ability to apply themselves in lessons are good. This is reflected in the good progress they make in many lessons. Students demonstrate a good understanding of how to be safe. Bullying incidents are rare and students are confident that there is always a member of staff to talk to should the need arise. Students say that there are many opportunities to develop their understanding of being healthy. However, they feel that they need to take more responsibility for adopting a healthy lifestyle. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The number of exclusions has reduced and attendance is above average. Students are particularly

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enthusiastic about the opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community. This is especially true of activities planned in feeder schools through the sports leadership course and community involvement in performing arts events through the school's specialist status.

Students have a good awareness of the value of diverse cultures and of moral, spiritual and social issues. This comes as a result of their involvement in a range of activities, including planned events in personal, social and health education, links to local sports clubs and community groups, for example by taking part in the 'show racism the red card' scheme at the local professional football club.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between students and teachers create a positive environment for learning which results in students making good progress in many lessons. Many teachers are knowledgeable and passionate about their subject and transmit their enthusiasm to the students. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of activities, which successfully engage students in learning and enable them to know what they can do and how to improve. For example, students were highly motivated in a mathematics lesson where they worked on percentages to calculate the depreciation in value of cars and motor bikes over time. The teacher's enthusiasm and his short, sharp question and answer sessions with regular positive feedback, engaged the students and enabled them to learn well.

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Students have an understanding of their targets and many teachers use assessment to plan lessons and to monitor students' progress closely. Despite many strengths in teaching observed during the inspection, there remain some inconsistencies. Teachers do not always use assessment data to plan lessons which engage students through interesting activities and take account of their individual needs. Learning outcomes are not always clear and, therefore, teachers do not ensure that students know what they can do and how to improve.

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop the curriculum to ensure that it more effectively meets the differing needs and aspirations of all groups of students. Students comment very positively about the range of opportunities available to them, both within the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities. There are many examples of curriculum development having a beneficial impact on improving outcomes such as new courses in ICT and science, the introduction a good range of vocational courses and BTEC courses in physical education and drama. The school's specialist status has played an important part in developing the curriculum especially in partnerships with feeder schools and the community.

Students are enthusiastic in their praise for the school's good care, guidance and support. Students are well known as individuals, and the inclusion team has effectively developed its capacity to meet the learning and well-being needs of students. Well timed and targeted interventions address students' learning difficulties, enabling them to access the curriculum and learn independently. Transition from feeder schools is well planned and provides taster days to enable students to familiarise themselves with the school buildings and get to know staff. Students receive good advice from school staff and external agencies enabling them to make the transition from school to further education, training and work. Strong systems are in place to promote attendance and these have resulted in above average attendance figures and also a reduction in the number of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The drive and enthusiasm of the dedicated headteacher, supported by very effective senior leaders, has focused the school on raising standards through creating a culture of high expectations that most staff and students support. The success of this is reflected in the willingness of most staff to improve their practice. The headteacher and senior leaders were quick to identify the reasons for the decline in attainment that led to significantly below average results in 2008 and have successfully addressed areas of concern. This has

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resulted in improved assessment procedures, which are now being used effectively to monitor individual and groups of students' progress, and to target those at risk of underachieving. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities throughout the school and middle managers are now more accountable for the performance of the departments. However, there remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Accurate monitoring and evaluation of teaching has identified appropriate areas for improvement, and suitable training and support has been put in place to tackle these inconsistencies. Improvements in the quality of teaching have resulted in a significant increase in the number of good and better lessons. However, the above average results are still too dependent on intervention strategies because the percentage of good and better lessons is not yet high enough.

The school knows the importance of engaging with parents and carers in order that they can support their children's learning. However, a minority say that they do not feel that this is good enough and want the school to make greater efforts to communicate with them. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is good; for example, the percentage of students achieving their challenging levels is now good across all different groups. The development of community cohesion is at an early stage. The school has strong links with communities both locally and world-wide, enabling most students to experience communities, which are different from their own. However, this is not yet systematically managed and reviewed. Safeguarding procedures are now good. They involve clear record keeping, which is constantly reviewed and closely monitored. The school's specialist status is well managed and is having a significant impact on the school through curriculum developments and community and partnership work. Members of the governing body know the school well and provide good support but they do not sufficiently challenge the school to explain its actions and outcomes.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Sixth form

Students in 2007 and 2008 completed the sixth form with results which were broadly in line with national average. However, the sixth form has mirrored the main school by improving provision in order to raise standards quickly. Consequently, standards improved in 2008 with eight subjects achieving above average percentages for A to B and A to E grades at A level. This improvement continued in 2010 with 19 subjects achieving above average for A to B and A to E grades at A level. While this improvement is significant, the school recognises that too small a percentage of Year 12 students transfer into Year 13. Students demonstrate good teamwork skills and willingly take responsibility for themselves and other students in the school, as when supporting younger students to feel safe in the school.

The quality of teaching observed supported the school's view that teaching has improved and that a larger percentage of lessons are good and better. There were examples of good teaching where students were developing independent learning skills to help them take increased responsibility for their learning. Where teaching was satisfactory, students were not encouraged to think for themselves and teachers did not use assessment data to identify progress being made by different groups. Students say that the curriculum provides them with a breadth of AS and A level courses, but feel that there are some constraints on their choices and the teaching of study skills is variable. Some students felt that the curriculum did not offer enough vocational options, for example, opportunities to build on Level 2 BTEC courses. The care, guidance and support of students is a strength. Students said that they feel cared for as individuals and are given good advice in their choices for further and higher education. Satisfactory leadership of the sixth form is providing a focus on improving students' outcomes with the development of clear plans to tackle remaining areas for improvement in teaching and the curriculum.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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

Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents responded to the questionnaire, with those who did varied in their views of the school. The majority were positive about the education their children received at Chilwell School. Their views are in line with the judgements made by the inspectors; particularly in relation to how well the school keeps them safe and how much their children enjoy school. A minority said that the school does not engage well enough with them, especially in order to help them support their children's learning. The inspectors found that the school is aware of this and have highlighted its development as a priority for further development.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 202 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1081 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	21	140	69	15	7	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	24	137	68	12	6	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	19	108	53	36	18	5	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	19	114	56	27	13	6	3
The teaching is good at this school	30	15	118	58	32	16	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	12	107	53	45	22	9	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	11	110	54	49	24	4	2
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)	26	13	116	57	26	13	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	14	125	62	24	12	7	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	18	106	52	29	14	8	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	11	108	53	32	16	7	3
The school is led and managed effectively	32	16	118	58	27	13	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	21	119	59	27	13	3	1

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 September 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Chilwell School, Queen's Road West, Nottingham, NG9 5AL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and were impressed with the maturity with which you answered our questions. We have decided that your school is now satisfactory and no longer requires significant improvement.

These are the main findings of the inspection.

You now make satisfactory progress so that the standards you reach by the end of Year 11 are above the national average. Coupled with your good attendance, this means that you are well prepared to move on to further education or training.

You contribute well to your school and the wider community.

The teaching is satisfactory overall but in many lessons you are now taught well and you are given opportunities to be involved in interesting activities.

Staff take good care to ensure you are looked after well and supported through the school.

Your headteacher and senior staff are enthusiastic and committed to improving the work of the school further so that you are progressing and achieving as well as you can.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

Remove remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring activities in lessons enable you all to achieve as well as you can.

Help your parents to have a better understanding of how they can support you in your learning.

Increase the number of sixth form students who continue from Year 12 to Year 13.

Enable subject leaders to take responsibility for intervention strategies which are in place to support individuals who need additional work.

We wish you well for your future at Chilwell School.

Yours sincerely

Roger Whittaker

Lead inspector

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