

# Uxbridge High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102444
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hillingdon
<b>Inspection number</b>	355192
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Daniel Burton HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1080
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	222
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Waine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Lang
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	The Greenway Uxbridge UB8 2PR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 34 teachers teach 35 lessons. They also made short visits to a further 17 lessons to look at behaviour and marking. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, data and the school's own analyses, including its self-evaluation, the governing body minutes, and 215 questionnaires completed by parents and carers. They also looked at questionnaires completed by staff and students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Progress and attainment in subjects where students have previously achieved less well, including English.
- Whether teaching fully meets the needs of the most-able students.
- The extent to which the sixth form secures good outcomes for students whose courses end at the end of Year 12.

## Information about the school

Uxbridge High School is a larger than the average secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. While 45% of students are of White British heritage, the school serves students from a very wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds including a small number of refugees and students from asylum-seeker families. Almost half the students speak English as an additional language with a few students at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average. The range of needs includes behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties. The school is a specialist technology college.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Uxbridge High School provides an outstanding quality of education. Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, staff have worked with tremendous effect to build on the strengths identified in the last inspection and to tackle the few remaining areas of weakness. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved and provision for care, guidance and support is outstanding. In addition, the quality of governance is first rate. These improvements have had a striking impact in improving outcomes for students. Many outcomes, such as the extent to which students feel safe, the contribution students make to the school and wider community, students' development of workplace and other skills, and all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary.

- Students' attainment has risen year on year since the last inspection with the result that the proportion of students attaining five good grades at GCSE, including in English and mathematics, is now significantly above average having previously been low. In the 2010 examinations, 88% of students attained five GCSEs at grades A\* to C. Achievement in mathematics and science, two of the school's specialist subjects, is outstanding.
- The school's outstanding commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity has ensured that there are no variations in the achievement of different groups of learners. The higher-than-average proportions of students known to be eligible for free school meals achieve at least as well as other students and their attainment is much higher than for similar students nationally and closely aligned to the rest of the school.
- Leaders and managers are highly responsive to students' differing needs and ensure that all students, including those facing complex personal circumstances, achieve well. The school can point to many striking examples of the effectiveness of its work in securing good and often outstanding outcomes for students who are newly arrived into the United Kingdom. All students receive excellent pastoral care and guidance.
- The school is an extremely cohesive community. Students from the very wide range of ethnic backgrounds served by the school get on extremely well together. They are highly respectful of each other's differing cultures and experiences.
- Excellent leadership at all levels is at the heart of the school's success. Systems to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work have proved to be highly effective and are now having a clear impact in addressing low attainment in subjects where students have previously achieved less well. For example, attainment in English, previously low, was average in 2010 and is rising quickly as a result of incisive

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analysis to help staff ensure that provision is better matched to students' individual needs than before.

- Improvements to the quality of the sixth form are reflected in its growing popularity and the sixth form is now attracting significant numbers of students from elsewhere. Facilities for sixth form students are excellent. Leaders and managers are extremely mindful of the need to consolidate and strengthen leadership capacity in the sixth form as the sixth form continues to grow in size.

While leaders and managers are rightly proud of the significant improvements which have been secured, they also recognise that there remain a few areas in need of improvement to secure outstanding outcomes for all groups of students.

- Not enough students attain the very highest grades at GCSE and A level.
- This is because, while most teaching is good and some is outstanding, staff are not yet equally skilled in providing opportunities for students to develop their skills through independent work or work in groups. Occasionally, this means the pace of learning for the most able is too slow.
- In some lessons, strategies to check students' learning are too rooted in questioning techniques, with too little use of assessment information to enable the teacher to assess the understanding of the whole group and adjust teaching accordingly.
- While many students engage in extra-curricular sports, not all students in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form have sufficient opportunities to engage in physical education activities.

However, striking improvements since the last inspection, rooted in incisive and effective self-evaluation, provide compelling and demonstrable evidence of the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the proportion of students attaining grades A\* to A at GCSE and A\* to B at A level by:
  - increasing opportunities for all students, including the most able, to work at a faster pace through independent and group work
  - ensuring the best practice in the use of assessment in lessons is seen more widely so that teachers are equally effective in devising strategies to assess, build on and accelerate the progress of the whole group .
- Increase opportunities for 14 to 19-year-olds to engage in physical education activities.

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

<b>2</b>
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- Students of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds report that they feel extremely safe in school. They are highly appreciative of the care provided by their teachers and other staff, and know that extensive support is available whenever they need extra help or advice.

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- Students' commitment to supporting the rest of the school and wider community is reflected in the range of local and national awards achieved by individuals and groups of students, including the Get Set Awards, the Jack Petchey Gold Award and the Princess Diana Award. Other students sit on the Hillingdon Youth Council and the United Kingdom Youth Parliament.
- In most lessons, students' good and sometimes outstanding behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. Students thrive in lessons where the teaching is well paced and imaginative, and work extremely well when given opportunities to share their ideas in groups. In one outstanding mathematics lesson, students made excellent progress working together to solve a range of quadratic equations. Students are always polite and usually work well even on the rare occasions that teaching is less engaging.
- Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of English language acquisition make excellent gains in the learning support centre as a result of highly personalised support, for example to remedy weaknesses in reading. In most lessons, these students make the same good progress as their peers because teachers are mindful of potential barriers to learning and plan well to meet them. In a very small minority of lessons, students with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties make less progress than their peers because of a lack of one-to-one support to help keep them focused.
- Current students are making good progress in English as a result of consistently good and improved teaching, and refinements to setting arrangements so that the teaching better meets the needs of students of different abilities. Examination results indicate that more students are on track to secure grades A\* to C and A\* to A in GCSE English than ever before.
- Preparation for future economic well-being is exemplary because the outstanding curriculum is extremely responsive to individual needs. The proportion of former students not in education, employment or training is lower than seen nationally and there are many striking and successful examples of excellent outcomes for students who have benefited from highly tailored programmes of study. Attendance has risen significantly and is now above average.
- Students are committed to leading healthy lifestyles. Many students are engaged in extra-curricular sports and the school's sports teams have enjoyed notable regional success.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

- The large majority of teaching secures good progress. Teachers are extremely well organised and use their excellent subject knowledge to prepare students well for public examinations. Learning is enhanced by the excellent relationships students enjoy with their teachers, not least because of their appreciation of their teachers' willingness and determination to help them do their best. Lessons are well structured and ensure that all students have a very clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve. Good and imaginative use of resources, including new technologies, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning. Students know how well they are doing and, when marking is best, for example in English, they have a keen understanding of how they can improve. In a few subjects, marking is not sufficiently effective in identifying the next steps needed for improvement.
- The excellent blend of academic and vocational courses is extremely well tailored to meet students' individual needs and aspirations. Partnership arrangements are fully exploited to provide work-related training and college placements for students who find traditional subjects less engaging. Students in Year 9 benefit from opportunities to secure qualifications in Asset Languages and, where appropriate, in community languages. The curriculum is enhanced well through specialist status, and students are able to choose from the full range of qualifications in science, including the three separate sciences. Provision in design and technology is enhanced through the offer

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of the 14 ♦♦?19 vocational BTEC in engineering. Specialist funding has also helped support students at risk of underachieving through, for example, a weekend residential course to boost their achievement in mathematics and English. Discrete citizenship lessons for all students, together with special events, ensure that students have an excellent understanding of the challenges facing the national and global community.

- Excellent provision for care, guidance and support is exemplified by the school's superb transition arrangements for students entering the school in Year 7 and for those leaving at the end of Years 11, 12 or 13. Arrangements to support new arrivals to the United Kingdom are also excellent with sophisticated assessment arrangements in place to ensure that all aspects of provision are well matched to the needs of those at the early stages of learning English. Work to support potentially vulnerable groups is exemplary and ensures, for example, that students from the Gypsy-Roma community are fully integrated into school life, feel extremely safe and achieve well. Students facing challenging personal circumstances are highly appreciative of the excellent support provided by the school. One student, typifying the views of others, commented 'The school's like a second home to me.'

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

- The school's success in raising attainment exemplifies the impact of leaders and managers in embedding ambition and driving improvement. Staff are united in their determination to secure the best possible outcomes for students. Of the 79 members of staff who contributed to the Ofsted questionnaire, 100% agreed with the statement, 'I am proud to be a member of staff at this school.'
- Success in raising achievement has been accompanied by demonstrably effective strategies to raise attendance to above average and to reduce fixed-term exclusions to below average.
- Leaders and managers are relentless in their pursuit of excellence, seizing on the best practice seen in other institutions both nationally and overseas. Arrangements for the governance of the school are first class. The governing body is acutely aware of its statutory responsibilities and plays a crucial role in providing support for the school and in holding leaders and managers to account.
- The leadership and management of teaching and learning is innovative, relentless and highly effective. The school has been extremely resourceful in tackling previous



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difficulties in recruitment and has been at the forefront of initiatives such as Teach First and Teaching Leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and constantly improving. Lessons benefit from teachers' excellent professionalism, reflected in their willingness to have their lessons regularly observed to constantly improve their practice.

- Excellent provision to promote community cohesion underpins much that is outstanding in the school. Leaders' and managers' comprehensive understanding of students' diverse needs and backgrounds are matched by an excellent range of strategies to support parents and carers whose circumstances make it harder for them to engage with the school. The school's work to support parents and carers who are less confident speaking English typifies the commitment of all staff to promoting equality of opportunity. There is no significant difference in the performance of students of different ethnic heritage, including those from White British backgrounds.
- Arrangements to safeguard children are exemplary. Site security is enhanced through provision for CCTV and policies relating to child protection are extremely comprehensive and regularly updated.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Sixth form

The growing sixth form has proved to be increasingly successful in securing high quality outcomes for students.

Provision is extremely well tailored to meet the differing needs of students. As a result, students can choose from a wide range of courses and pathways lasting from one to three years. While a good range of A-level courses are offered, the sixth form is highly

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successful in meeting the needs of those who prefer more vocational modes of study through, for example, the 14 ♦♦ 19 Retail Diploma or through qualifications in financial studies. Outcomes and success rates for students who leave the sixth form at the end of Year 12 are good. For example, in 2010, all students who completed their studies as planned at the end of Year 12 secured places on college courses or in employment.

While achievement on A-level courses is often good, there remains some variety between subjects and the proportion of students attaining the highest A-level grades, though rising, is below average.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the work of the school. Almost all of the parents who responded to the parental questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school.' Similarly, 94% of parents judge that the school is led and managed effectively. Response rates, while positive, were slightly less unanimous with regard to the school's provision to support healthy lifestyles, strategies to manage unacceptable behaviour and strategies to engage parents and carers in different aspects of the school's work. Inspectors looked at each of these issues and found that, while most students adopt healthy lifestyles, there is not enough provision for physical education in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. They found that strategies to manage unacceptable behaviour are excellent, highly appreciated by students, and highly effective in reducing incidents of poor behaviour. Inspectors also judged the effectiveness of the school's work to engage parents and carers to be outstanding and enhanced through initiatives such as family learning, wide-ranging systems of communication and excellent use of community workers to support parents and carers from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Uxbridge High 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 215 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1080 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	33	134	62	6	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	58	27	146	68	8	4	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	72	33	125	58	15	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	24	150	70	6	3	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	60	28	144	67	6	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	20	139	65	22	10	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	18	142	66	26	12	1	1
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)	52	24	141	66	8	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	18	153	71	13	6	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	22	130	60	20	9	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	19	138	64	13	6	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	60	28	141	66	7	3	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	88	44	119	55	4	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

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



18 February 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Uxbridge High School, Uxbridge UB8 2PR**

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to inspectors when we recently visited your school. Here are our main findings.

- Your school provides an outstanding quality of education. Staff have worked with tremendous effect to make the school even better than before. Many of you told us how much the school has improved since the last inspection and we fully agree.
- Attainment has improved every year and more students now attain five good grades at GCSE, including in English and mathematics, than seen in other schools nationally. All of you achieve well, regardless of your differing abilities and backgrounds.
- All of you receive excellent care, guidance and support. Your teachers and other staff do everything they can to help you achieve your best. Many of you told us how much staff have helped you when you have found things difficult.
- Students from all backgrounds get on extremely well together. You are highly respectful of each other's differing cultures and experiences.
- The sixth form has also improved and now attracts significant numbers of students from elsewhere. Facilities in the sixth form are excellent.

The Headteacher and his team know that there will always be room for further improvement even in an outstanding school. We have asked them to:

- increase the proportion of grades A\* to A at GCSE and A\* to B at A level by extending opportunities for you to work at a faster pace through independent and group work and ensuring that teachers check how well everyone is doing at regular points in the lesson
- increase opportunities for 14 to 19-year-olds to engage in physical education activities.

All of you can help by maintaining your improved attendance so that attendance rises from above average to high.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Burton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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