

Hartshill School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125766
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	359941
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Rashida Sharif 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	948
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Fulleylove
Headteacher	Mike Garlick
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Most of the inspection time was spent looking at learning, including observations of 42 lessons with 34 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, members of the senior leadership team including heads of departments, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's data on students' performance, records of the support provided to them and their progress. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's improvement plan, policies and procedures, including health and safety and risk assessments. The 155 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised. Inspectors also analysed the questionnaires returned 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 effectiveness of teaching and learning in ensuring that students at all levels, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, gifted and talented and the small number of those from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress in lessons and across time.
- Whether the curriculum meets the needs of all students and in particular those with special education needs and/or disabilities including those with a statement of special educational needs.
- The effectiveness of leaders, at all levels, in ensuring greater rigour with monitoring and evaluation to sustain and bring about continuous improvements.
- The effectiveness of partnerships in helping students to improve both academically and personally.

Information about the school

Hartshill School is of average size for a secondary school. It has emerged from a period of great turbulence including staffing and staffing structures since its last inspection in October 2007. Most students are from White British backgrounds and live in the immediate neighbourhood, although a growing number are travelling longer distances. The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are very few students from minority ethnic groups or for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is rapidly increasing but remains below the national average. A few students are in the care of the local authority.

The school has specialist Science and Arts Status and a number of awards, for example Investors in People, the Schools Achievement Award and the Eco School award. It has gained Healthy Schools status.

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

Hartshill School provides a satisfactory education for its students. It is improving and has some good features, notably the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 4, and the quality of care, guidance and support for all its students. Students make satisfactory progress and reach average standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 4. Staff, governors and students are actively involved in making this a strongly inclusive school. The school raises the aspirations of its students with a growing number successfully going on to further education or employment. Staff are highly committed to the school's continued improvements. As one student put it, 'teachers are always telling us that no goal is beyond us and encourage us to do our best - we all have mentors'.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It is highly effective in securing students' interest, motivation and involvement, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is particularly true at Key Stage 4, where the curriculum has contributed significantly to the sustained improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection. The curriculum is augmented by a rich variety of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and the performing arts. The popularity of dance has grown considerably since it was introduced in 2010. The school has used its specialist status in science well to develop links with the local community including links with primary schools.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Students say that lessons are generally enjoyable. There is, however, a significant variation in the quality of teaching. During the inspection, good practice was observed in some teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons and improve students' learning; this however is not consistent in all lessons. Some teachers do not always use the detailed assessment data available to plan lessons so that the needs of individual students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are fully met. Consequently the work set is not consistently challenging and students are not always clear about what they need to do to succeed. Marking is irregular across subjects and departments and does not always inform students what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work further. Comments and questions by some teachers in students' books are not always followed up nor are students given time to respond to them.

Students, parents and carers are very clear that they are well cared for, guided and supported, particularly those who need additional help or who may be at risk of disengaging from their education. Pastoral support is adapted to students' particular needs and makes effective use of a wide range of external services and agencies. Students are well behaved, showing consideration to each other both in lessons and around the school, and make a good contribution to the community.

The schools' capacity to improve further is good. Self-evaluation by the headteacher and extended leadership team is rigorous and accurate. They are unequivocally determined to

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raise standards of attainment by improving the quality of teaching and learning and are securing an enthusiastic response from among the teaching staff. They have had significant success in improving progress in mathematics and science, and are taking good steps to maintain this improvement. Attainment in English is beginning to improve after a dip in 2010. The school and the head of department have a clear view of what is needed to make the necessary improvements. There is excellent practice among some middle leaders, but a few are not as effective in leading and managing their subjects, sharing good practice and holding staff fully to account. Senior leaders use a range of systems for monitoring and reviewing its work, but the practice among middle leaders in using these systems is less consistent. Consequently, while there has been incremental improvement in examination results at Key Stage 4 since the last inspection, there remains variation in the performance of different subjects.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate inadequate teaching and increase the proportion of good and better teaching by ensuring that all teachers consistently:
 - make better use of assessment data to plan lessons that meet students' individual needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensure that marking is regular, and informs students of any good features and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics to 58% by 2012 by:
 - improving performance in English
 - ensuring more consistent use of best practice across subject departments.
- Improve the performance of middle leaders, removing the variation in the performance between subjects by:
 - improving the way they review and evaluate the work of their department, especially teaching and learning
 - ensuring they set appropriately challenging and realistic targets for improvement
 - supporting middle leaders to hold staff in their departments to account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Overall, from just below average starting points on entry, students make satisfactory progress. Analysis of the school's current progress data and interim module and test results indicate that upward trends are being sustained and built upon. The current Year 11 students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number of those from minority ethnic groups, are firmly on track to exceed the school's ambitious targets in English and mathematics in 2011. In more than half the lessons seen during the inspection, students were making good progress. The progress is

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undoubtedly better when activities are relevant to students' interests and aptitudes, and introduced at a brisk pace with minimal teacher input. In the good lessons seen, students were as a result involved in their learning and demonstrated good independent learning skills. They demonstrated that they could work in groups and take responsibility. The progress of different groups of students, particularly those students with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, is satisfactory but remains inconsistent in some lessons across the school. Pace of learning drops when some teachers' planning is general and does not cater for individual needs or set high enough expectations.

Students say they feel safe and measures are taken consistently to ensure that any bullying or racism, if it occurs, is reported and dealt with swiftly. Some students in Year 11 have received training so that they can support others and work closely with relevant staff. Students are proud of their school and the range of opportunities it affords them to prepare for the next stage in their lives. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good. They play a significant role in the life of the school and are encouraged to take responsibility readily for themselves and those around them, for example, as mentors, prefects and members of an active school council. Students are actively involved in staff appointments and in contributing to the school improvement plan. Students have a clear understanding of what keeping healthy means and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle although some agree that they do not always put this into practice. They undertake a range of charitable activities, including raising funds for a number of national and international charities.

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	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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

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How effective is the provision?

When the teaching is planned carefully and focused on students' individual needs, lessons provide all groups of students with appropriately challenging and stimulating work, consequently resulting in them making good progress. When support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well by teachers, their work is finely focussed on their needs and staff provide challenge as well as reassurance. In some of the other lessons observed, teachers' planning lacks sufficient detail and focuses more on what the teacher will do, rather than what students will learn. In a few instances, teachers tend to dominate the lesson, so students are not always given the opportunity to develop good independent learning skills. Despite this, students remain well-behaved and eager to learn. The quality of marking is variable and some inconsistency is evident in terms of its usefulness to students.

The curriculum provides a wide variety of courses, often in collaboration with other local providers, and is well tailored to meet students' individual needs and aspirations, particularly those with special education needs and/or disabilities and the looked after students. Specialist science and art status has enabled the school both to enhance and extend its curriculum, benefiting not only its own students but also those from the local partner schools.

Care systems are well organised and staff carry their roles out diligently. Students are confident that if they have any concerns they know who to go to and will be given the guidance and support they need. For example one student stated 'when there are problems, the school finds solutions'. The school works hard with a range of agencies to maintain and further improve the attendance of those students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. It has good systems in place for transition into, through and beyond the school. Students receive good quality information, advice and guidance about future courses and career opportunities.

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 impact of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and has helped the school to emerge out of a period of great turbulence since its last inspection. Leaders and managers at all levels have a strong shared vision, and an understanding of the key priorities for the school. The senior team and many middle managers are providing the good capacity to focus effectively on improving teaching and learning. However, senior managers are aware that there is still work to be undertaken,

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especially in the subjects with lower results such as English, history and religious education. The school's systems for monitoring and evaluating its work are now sufficiently robust to ensure accountability at all levels of management for the outcomes achieved by students. Senior leaders produce detailed plans for improvement based on the accurate self-evaluation, and which focus on improving teaching and learning. However, middle managers are not always focused sufficiently on the learning outcomes for students when making their judgments of teaching, so they sometimes miss opportunities to fine-tune improvements. A few subject targets either lack challenge or are unrealistic.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and discharge their statutory responsibilities. All regulations for safeguarding students and staff are met well. Its well-developed quality assurance and risk assessment systems take account of the views of students, parents and carers. The arrangements for carrying out checks on staff are robust. Governors and staff regularly receive up-to-date relevant training.

The school works well with other schools and agencies. These partnerships make an important contribution to the good quality of care, guidance and support that students receive. The school obtains the views of students, parents and carers systematically and regularly uses them to inform its self-evaluation and improvement plans.

The schools response to promoting equal opportunities is satisfactory. It has a basic policy for promoting equalities. Any racist incident, should this occur, is dealt with swiftly and effectively. The Key Stage 4 curriculum has been planned well, taking good account of students' needs and local circumstances. The school has identified and evaluated the various aspects of its curriculum and specialist college activities that contribute towards community cohesion, but its resulting strategy is not yet consistently evaluated for impact.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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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Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are happy with their children's experiences of the school. Many praised specific aspects of the school's work, including care and support offered to their children. They have confidence in teachers and in the leadership and management of the school. Parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school, feel safe, and are well cared for.

A small minority of parents and carers raised issues about being informed about their children's progress and the support given to them to enable them to support their children in their learning. Some did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. However, inspectors found students behaviour in lessons and around the school to be good. Her Majesty's Inspector discussed a few concerns raised by individual parents and carers with the school and, where appropriate, action will follow.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hartshill 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 155 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 948 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	28	101	65	8	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	52	34	97	63	4	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	36	79	51	14	9	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	35	89	57	5	3	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	50	32	86	55	8	5	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	28	84	54	19	12	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	25	94	61	15	10	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)	49	32	88	57	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	34	88	57	8	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	25	84	54	20	13	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	25	89	57	10	6	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	54	35	81	52	7	5	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	41	77	50	8	5	1	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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">■ 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.



13 May 2011

Dear students

Inspection of Hartshill School, Nuneaton, CV10 0NA

Thank you very much for your help during our visit. We found what you had to say very interesting and helpful in making our judgments about your school. We were pleased to hear that you enjoy school. Many of you told us how much you appreciate the help and guidance that your teachers give you at all times. You also told us how much you appreciate the range of opportunities that you are given both during and after school. We were impressed to see so many of you willingly take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly the sports and dance.

We judged your school to be satisfactory and we found it to have some good features - for example the curriculum is rich and varied particularly at Key Stage 4. You told us that you found your teachers to be helpful and supportive and most make your lessons interesting by involving you in your learning and asking challenging questions. The care, guidance and support that you receive is good. We saw that some of you contribute well to your school and the wider community. We were impressed with your knowledge and understanding about adopting a healthy lifestyle, although some of you admitted that you did not always practise it.

We worked very closely with your headteacher and agreed on what the school should do to make it even better. We have asked the school to:

- raise the percentage of you gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C to 58% by 2011 by improving English results, developing the arts specialism and enabling the various subjects to draw on best practice of others
- improve teaching by ensuring teachers use assessment data to plan lessons that meet your needs, and make sure that marking in your books is regular and helps you to improve your work
- ensure that the middle leaders remove the variation in the performance between subjects and set realistic targets for improvement.

You can help by making sure you read and act on teachers' comments in marking and by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector

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