

# Davison Church of England High School for Girls, Worthing

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126093
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	364001
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Simms

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1075
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ray Oxenbridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Della West
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Selborne Road Worthing BN11 2JX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They observed 39 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 37 teachers, some of which were jointly observed with senior members of staff. Inspectors spoke to the school's improvement partner by telephone and held discussions with senior and middle leaders, with other staff and with members of the governing body. They talked to groups of students formally and with many others in lessons and around the school. Inspectors observed students at breaks and at lunchtime, attended assembly and observed other activities. They scrutinised school documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings, advisors' reports, school development plans, students' assessment records, documents relating to safeguarding, attendance data and records of the monitoring of teaching. They analysed 357 parents' and carers' questionnaires and some from staff and students.

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

- Whether groups such as the single Year 7 class, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those just above that level, progress as well as others.
- Which factors have limited 'value added'.
- Whether recent improvement in mathematics standards and achievement are sustainable.

## Information about the school

This is a large school where until three years ago, students have entered in Year 8. There is now a single class of Year 7 annually, to accommodate girls from church-going families in a neighbouring area where the age of transfer is different. These integrate into nine other incoming classes in Year 8 and beyond. Proportions of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those new to learning English is below average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities, though this is increasing. The majority of these needs relate to specific or moderate learning difficulties. The school has retained its Specialist Technology College status since 1999. It holds many awards including designation as an International School for ten years, Artsmark Gold and the Future Vision School award from 2009. The on-site nursery was inspected separately on the first day of this inspection.

**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

This is an outstanding school. Excellent leadership and management and the good governance reported at its last inspection have successfully maintained the school's many strengths. These include promoting students' outstanding personal development through very high quality care, guidance and support. Additionally, from an average start, students' academic attainment has improved, so by the time they leave they achieve examination results of the highest standard. Self-evaluation is critical and incisive, identifying the right areas for improvement and demonstrating outstanding capacity to improve the school further. Senior staff and governors are refreshingly open to critique and new ideas and set challenging targets for school improvement.

The highly inclusive, welcoming atmosphere and good behaviour result from exceptional relationships among students and adults, promoting a cohesive sense of a safe, 'family' community. This is greatly valued by many parents and carers, who value the school's positive impact on their daughters' happiness and success. Good teaching and an outstanding, greatly improved curriculum both underpin students' high levels of attainment, good achievement and their exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff are good at discovering what motivates students individually, enabling the vast majority to become self-reliant, creative learners. Many examples of outstanding teaching seen in lessons exemplify this success, but senior staff recognise that it is not fully consistent across the school.

Despite staffing difficulties in mathematics, there is notable and continuing improvement in the very high proportion of students who leave with higher GCSE grades, including English and mathematics. This is because the school has successfully focused on these key subjects, and consequently provides students with very secure key skills for later education and working life. Staff have improved support for students just above the level of special educational needs and/or disabilities particularly well, an issue from its last inspection. Effective nurture groups now promote much better achievement, attitudes and attendance. Through this and other improved provision, previous weaker achievement among a handful of students is being eliminated. Students who enter in Year 7 make better progress than others by Year 9, integrating very well with new entrants in Year 8. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to others by Year 11, but managers recognise that some do not make quite such good progress in Years 8 and 9, so planning is under way to improve this. In a few less successful lessons, progress is slower as lower expectations and weaker planning occasionally lead to distracted behaviour which can disturb learning. Examples of very useful assessment, particularly in English, help students understand their learning, but the school has identified the need to improve written marking to clarify how students can help themselves to improve their work to meet targets.

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

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching building on the outstanding practice which already exists in the school by:
  - making sure that all lesson planning provides effective challenge for students of different abilities, particularly to ensure better progress for Years 8 and 9 students with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - providing regular, informative written marking and other guidance which identifies precisely how students can improve their work in the short term, including its presentation, to achieve their next targets
  - making sure that all staff manage the very small proportion of disruptive behaviour effectively to minimise adverse effects on students' learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Students develop extremely positive attitudes, making very effective contributions to their own learning, so the majority of lessons are characterised by a keen sense of enjoyment. Outstanding progress in a Year 10 science lesson, for instance, typified the excellent behaviour and enthusiastic approach seen in many lessons, as students gained their first exciting experience of genetics. In an excellent Year 8 drama lesson, students learned exceptionally well, energetically and sensitively rehearsing and performing scenes related to an anti-bullying theme. Excellent relationships enable students to ask questions and discuss ideas very confidently, reinforcing good learning. In outstanding music lessons, teachers' highly effective group facilitation led to refined, creative performances using instruments in Year 9 and percussive rhythms and chant in Year 8.

Students feel safe and their understanding of how to keep fit and healthy is good. High attainment at Year 11 continues to improve, most significantly in the proportion of students gaining five or more higher grades including English and mathematics. Attainment in the specialist subjects is high and students do well in humanities, sciences and modern foreign languages. Years 10 and 11 students are achieving very well in the much wider range of vocational courses not available in previous years. Students do well in most subjects they take, but the number of subjects has been reduced for some, lowering their 'points score'. Students' mature understanding, combined with their own wish to become involved with, serve and help others, leads to exceptional contributions to various local and wider communities. Attendance is average and improving with the proportion of persistent absentees declining, though further improvement remains firmly among managers' priorities. Students' intense responses to a very moving assembly about bereavement exemplify their strong empathy with others and their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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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>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
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>2</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>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<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?

Good teaching, a rich, stimulating curriculum and exceptional care, guidance and support lead to students' very well-balanced personal and academic development. An extensive range within the specialist subjects leads to high standards and good links into other areas of study. Students greatly appreciate the encouragement they receive from staff, which they recognise helps them achieve their best in everything they do. Outstanding progress occurs when learning is sensitively planned to meet the needs of all students, contrasting with less success in the very small minority of lessons which leave students 'bored' because work is not planned well enough. Excellent assessment practice exists in many lessons and in some marking, but the school's focus on making this more consistent is judicious because a variety of students are unclear about how to improve.

Significant improvements to the curriculum have given rise to courses well tailored to students' needs. After a delay while the school investigated Diploma provision, the recent inclusion of vocational BTEC qualifications in the curriculum has significantly improved the match of courses to individuals' learning styles. The school's data indicates that students are on course to meet their challenging targets in 2011. There are high levels of participation in the exceptional extra-curricular and enrichment programme.

The huge range of carefully considered care, guidance and support procedures and structures is highly effective and remains a key strength of the school. 'Family' is a strong pervading ethos, with new 'colour families' through the school significantly strengthening

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students' sense of belonging to a group. Nurture groups for targeted students are highly effective in developing confidence and self-esteem, keeping some who would otherwise drop out of education securely included within the system and achieving well. Highly effective, small group work supports those who study part time at college, very effectively supporting their achievement.

*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?

Outstanding management by the headteacher and senior leaders, supported by committed, knowledgeable governors, has sustained the school's strong position and ambitious determination has successfully driven improvements. Governors have well-considered plans for greater strategic involvement, particularly in understanding finer details of different groups' achievement. Senior staff have robust support from middle leaders and others, so higher attainment and better achievement have resulted from their hard work. Good management of teaching and learning ensures that staff development focuses accurately on improving those areas identified by the inspection.

Strong commitment to equality and eliminating discrimination, to the extent where the school provides some necessary services from its own resources, leads to an extremely harmonious community where students from all backgrounds get on very well together. Excellent partnerships of all types, including those related to the technology specialism, support rich opportunities in these and other areas such as the arts. At the local and international level, such partnerships promote outstanding community cohesion and enrich the students' experience. This is also strong at the national level, though the school has sensibly highlighted this area for further development. Good safeguarding procedures ensure that students stay safe and the school is extremely mindful of potential hazards. These and other comprehensively contemplated priorities remain high on the school's widely debated agenda. Leaders at all levels play a full part in both the discussions and in successfully implementing the priorities, creating outstanding capacity for the school to improve further.

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*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	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>

## Views of parents and carers

The return to the Ofsted questionnaire was broadly average. The very large majority of parents and carers are highly satisfied with the school's provision and the outcomes for their daughters. Relatively few made critical comments on questionnaires, but of those who did, most were about individual matters related to particular students. Some of these were about the ways in which the school deals with disruptive behaviour, though levels of concern were lower than those expressed by students themselves. Inspectors pursued this matter in some depth through discussion with staff, by particular focus in lessons and by additional discussion with students. Senior staff have already identified this as an area for improvement, and with parents, carers and students, that while the very large majority of behaviour is good and often outstanding, the management of disruption in a small minority of lessons is inconsistent. Inspectors have asked the school to improve it. A very few other comments express parents' and carers' concerns over slow responses to communication. Recent referral systems have changed and the school has agreed to make communication lines clearer to all staff to avoid such delay.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Davison Church of England High School for Girls 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 357 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	93	26	199	56	28	8	4	1
The school keeps my child safe	100	28	211	59	9	3	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	100	28	191	54	23	6	4	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	92	26	197	55	27	8	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	79	22	213	60	19	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	18	216	61	37	10	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	17	210	59	43	12	1	0
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)	86	24	197	55	16	4	4	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	87	24	197	55	31	9	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	13	211	59	39	11	16	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	13	206	58	33	9	4	1
The school is led and managed effectively	81	23	212	59	18	5	4	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	32	186	52	19	5	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](http://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"> <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.**



26 November 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of Davison Church of England High School for Girls, Worthing BN11 2JX**

Thank you for your courteous welcome when we came for the inspection. It was a pleasure to be there and to meet you in lessons, around the school and for more organised discussion in groups. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

Yours was a very strong school at its last inspection and excellent leadership and management have moved it on to become outstanding since then. Your attainment have risen, especially the numbers of you who get good GCSE grades including English and mathematics, and you make good progress. The curriculum is outstanding and the new BTEC courses are enabling more of you to get GCSE-equivalent higher grades. As a result your overall achievement has improved and is now outstanding. We were impressed by the huge range of extra-curricular opportunities in all subjects. Your high participation rates in these show how much you enjoy them. The school has remained strong in promoting your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, mainly because of outstanding care, guidance and support. Your contributions to local and international communities are extensive.

Teaching is good, with outstanding examples in many lessons, although this is not consistent across the school. Senior staff recognise this and have already identified strategies to improve teaching. We have asked the school to improve teachers' planning, to support and challenge students of different abilities and to provide better marking to identify exactly how you can improve your work to meet your targets.

Behaviour we saw in lessons and around the school was good, and often excellent, although a minority of you expressed concerns. We followed through on this and found that this is usually disturbance from a small number of students in some classes which is not always managed well enough. We have asked the school to improve on this as well. We feel that your very positive attitudes towards learning will enable you to help senior staff to make all aspects of learning better for all of you.

Yours sincerely

Janet Simms

Lead inspector

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