

Henbury School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109279
Local Authority	Bristol, City Of
Inspection number	377901
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Ian Hodgkinson HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	771
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Cook
Headteacher	Clare Bradford
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 October 2008
School address	Station Road Henbury Bristol BS10 7QH
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 28 teachers and 28 lessons, and briefly visited other lessons and activities. Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, members of the governing body, and students. Inspectors looked at documentation, including students' books, the school development plan, records of assessment and tracking of students' progress, plans and monitoring information for students whose circumstances made them vulnerable, records of the school's arrangements for the safeguarding and protection of students, and policies and procedures for promoting equality and countering discrimination. In addition, inspectors considered 249 parental and carer questionnaire responses, and those from 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 extent of the rise in students' attainment since the previous inspection.
- How successful the school has been in overcoming variations in students' attainment and progress between subjects.
- The quality of teaching and learning in securing consistently good or better progress for students, particularly in teachers' use of assessment information.
- The impact of strategies to improve students' attendance.

Information about the school

Henbury is smaller than the average sized secondary school and its number on roll has fallen slightly since the previous inspection. The large majority of students are White British, although the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen since the previous inspection and is now above the national average. A small number of students speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. An above-average proportion of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school caters for students with a wide range of special educational needs, including those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, hearing and visual impairments, and physical disabilities. The school holds International School status and a Healthy Schools award. It was designated as a specialist arts school in 2007.

A breakfast club and after-school club operates on the school site and is managed by a separate provider and was not, therefore, part 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Henbury School's effectiveness is satisfactory. It has a number of good and outstanding features, especially in the high quality of support it provides for its most vulnerable students and its outstanding work in promoting the cohesion of the school and local community. Highly effective partnerships with other schools and agencies make a significant contribution to students' progress and well-being. Students' overall attainment has risen strongly since the previous inspection. However, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good enough to ensure that all students make good progress across all subjects and both key stages. Students' achievement overall is satisfactory.

Two years ago the school's attainment was below national floor standards. The rise in overall attainment over successive years to broadly average levels reflects positively on the effectiveness of actions taken by school leaders, and the good capacity of the school to improve further. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses very well through very thorough self-evaluation, and leaders at all levels formulate detailed action plans to bring about improvement. Leaders monitor students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning very closely. They use this information to intervene with a very wide range of academic and pastoral support where students are identified as needing additional help. This intervention has ensured that students and groups who would otherwise be at risk of falling behind, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals, make generally good progress and have been closing the gaps in attainment with their peers. It has also helped to boost attainment in Key Stage 4 to ensure a very marked increase in the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grade C or above including English and mathematics.

Leaders set challenging targets for students' progress and the quality of provision, and improvements to the quality of teaching in a number of subjects have contributed to rising standards. The majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding, especially where teachers engage their students by helping them to learn independently. However, there remain too many lessons where teachers talk to the class for too long and do not match activities well enough to students' capabilities. A small minority of students in these lessons sometimes become restless and distract the teacher and others with off-task behaviour. This slows learning, including in some middle- and mixed-ability classes, and the overall progress of middle-attaining students is no better than satisfactory. While students know their

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targets well, teachers' marking of their work does not always give clear advice on how to improve to the next level. Students' attendance has remained low since the previous inspection, and the poor punctuality of a small minority reduces their time for effective learning.

The school's arts specialism has promoted very high standards in the specialist subjects of creative and performing arts. It has also contributed to the extensive opportunities for students to make an outstanding contribution to the community by engaging in local, national and international projects. Within school, too, students take on a wide range of responsibilities to support their peers and contribute ideas in support of school improvement. The headteacher's inspirational promotion of the school's vision for a school which 'belongs at the heart of the community, taking pride in the high aspirations, creativity and achievements of all' ensures that it is widely shared by staff, students, parents and carers.

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?

- Raise the proportion of good or better teaching, and thereby ensure that students achieve consistently well across all subjects and key stages, by:
 - ensuring that tasks are consistently well matched to students' abilities
 - promoting students' engagement, good behaviour and independent learning skills, and reducing the amount of teacher-led lesson content
 - improving the effectiveness of teachers' marking of students' work
 - ensuring that teachers more consistently meet the school's expectations for high quality teaching.
- Improve students' attendance and punctuality by:
 - making best use of recently-introduced strategies for the weekly monitoring of attendance and punctuality to raise the profile of good attendance across the school
 - ensuring that all staff consistently promote high expectations for students' punctuality to school and lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The improvement in students' overall attainment and progress since the last inspection has been strong in some places but slower in others. For example, students' progress has accelerated at Key Stage 4 but been just satisfactory at Key Stage 3. Students' achievement has been very strong in the specialist subjects of creative and performing arts. It has also been good in English, even though literacy

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standards are generally low when students join the school. In mathematics, attainment has risen sharply and higher attainers make particularly good progress, but progress for middle and lower attainers is satisfactory at best. While narrowing over time, remaining variations in GCSE examination results between other subjects reflect variations in the quality of learning in the classroom. Elsewhere, students often respond well when given opportunities to learn independently or work in groups to develop their ideas. However, where students are not effectively engaged in learning or spend too long listening to instruction from the teacher, restless behaviour by a small minority of students can distract learning. Students in middle and lower attaining groups make satisfactory progress overall. Higher attainers make generally good progress and respond with determination to challenging work set for them, especially in higher ability sets. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the exceptional quality of care and support provided for them and also make good progress, as do students who speak English as an additional language.

Students’ behaviour is satisfactory overall. The school site and corridors are calm. Students feel safe and told inspectors that instances of bullying were dealt with effectively. As part of the exceptional contribution that students make to the school and wider community, students take their roles as prefects and peer mentors very seriously in supporting the well-being of their peers. Their extensive work in promoting community events, engaging with primary school children and supporting senior citizens heightens their social awareness. Involvement in projects linked to schools internationally, and wide-ranging involvement in community arts projects through the school’s specialism, all serve to ensure that students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Not all students adopt the healthy lifestyles promoted by the school by taking up sports activities on offer, eating healthily and curbing smoking. Students, parents and carers have positive views of the way students are prepared for later life, including through extensive links with organisations across the community. Literacy skills and students’ use of information and communication technology (ICT) develop soundly. The proportion of students who are persistently absent has fallen sharply since the last inspection. However, despite a much improved picture in the early weeks of the current term, overall attendance remains low and a small minority of students are not urgent enough about getting to school or to lessons on time.

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	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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The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and teachers' use of assessment have been improving in key areas, which is helping to lift students' attainment and progress in many subjects. In the large majority of lessons, teachers have confident subject knowledge. In whole-class discussions, they carefully target their questions to involve different students, and ask students to explain their answers in some detail, thereby supporting their speaking skills. However, such whole-class discussions go on for too long in a significant minority of lessons. Outstanding lessons were seen in mathematics in Year 11 and in graphic design in Year 7, and in both cases students worked independently or in small groups to develop their work. The teacher then had time to check students' understanding, address misconceptions, and ensure that all students had work which challenged and developed their skills. In a minority of other lessons, tasks set for the whole class are sometimes either too difficult or not challenging enough for individual students. Students have a good knowledge of their targets and take pride in working to achieve these, but do not always have a precise grasp of how to improve their work to reach them. Teachers' marking comments vary widely in the detail they provide, and students did not always understand or act on these.

The curriculum has a number of imaginative aspects, such as the 'Learn to Learn' programme in Years 7 and 8 which is successfully developing students' skills for learning across the curriculum. Much work has gone into creating flexibility to meet students' needs and interests at both key stages, for example by offering higher attainers in Year 9 the opportunity of early entry and additional subjects in science and modern languages. The school successfully uses its wide range of partnerships with other providers, organisations and businesses to broaden and enrich opportunities for students and to establish clear progression routes post-16. Specialist subjects in the creative and performing arts show strong uptake and outcomes, and a wide range of extra-curricular activities is on offer. Tutor time is, however, too often not used well enough to support students' personal development.

Provision for the students most at risk of falling behind, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is comprehensive and highly effective. Excellent links with a wide range of outside agencies and well-planned and well-managed

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support in school ensure that these students make good progress. Child protection procedures are very well developed. The school establishes links with all pupils early in Key Stage 2 in feeder primary schools to ensure that they settle in confidently when they join in Year 7. Students’ academic progress and well-being are monitored very closely to ensure that they quickly receive necessary support and intervention programmes and a curriculum tailored to their needs. Early evidence suggests that new systems to monitor attendance more sharply on a weekly basis by tutors and pastoral leaders are beginning to show an impact in convincing students of the importance of good attendance. Poor punctuality is, however, not challenged with consistent rigour.

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 headteacher has set the school on a clear course of continuous improvement, in which she has the strong support of the school community. Senior leaders have been appointed to take charge of key remaining areas for development around teaching, learning, attendance and behaviour, and measurable improvement is evident in these. The school recognises the need to further strengthen targets for improvement in aspects of teaching in order to address remaining inconsistencies. By very careful monitoring of outcomes and provision, leaders have been successfully closing gaps in performance between subjects and groups of students. The very strong rise in the attainment and progress of students eligible for free school meals, for example, is a clear indicator of the success of school strategies to promote better equality of opportunity by raising the aspirations of all students. Middle leaders are playing an increasingly effective role in monitoring performance and raising attainment in their subjects.

Through regular contact with the school and its staff, and close monitoring of performance information, the governing body has a well-developed understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. It is fully involved in school improvement planning and review, and asks challenging questions of school leaders where targets have not been met. Careful management of the school’s finances have markedly reduced a sizeable budget deficit to a point where balance may be achieved by the end of the financial year. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet current government requirements. As well as providing opportunities for students to engage in national and international projects, the school and its students play an outstanding role in local initiatives to promote community cohesion.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding a mbition 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	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

At twice the national average, a high proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Parents and carers have a generally very favourable opinion of the school, its teaching and its leadership. A number wrote to praise the school’s care for students, and its effectiveness in meeting students’ individual needs. While most parents and carers agree that the school keeps their children safe, a few wrote to express concerns about the extent of bullying between students in the school. Inspectors asked groups of students about the extent of bullying. These students said that bullying was not a widespread issue, and where it occurred it was generally dealt with effectively by staff. They also praised the work of prefects and peer mentors in keeping students safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Henbury 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 249 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 771 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	31	147	59	18	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	96	39	135	54	13	5	3	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	96	39	135	54	12	5	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	29	144	58	17	7	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	86	35	141	57	9	4	4	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	74	30	142	57	23	9	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	22	157	63	29	12	3	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)	79	32	138	55	10	4	4	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	75	30	147	59	20	8	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	80	32	122	49	23	9	13	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	24	149	60	20	8	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	88	35	134	54	14	6	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	102	41	122	49	11	4	6	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



30 September 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Henbury School, Bristol BS10 7QH

Many thanks for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited the school for its recent inspection. We much appreciated the time you gave us in discussions, where you were able to let us know about the outstanding work that the school does in promoting better conditions for the local community. Many of you play an excellent part in taking on important roles in helping the school run effectively. The school has strong procedures to monitor your well-being and progress, and intervenes quickly to give extra help to those who need it.

The school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. Overall GCSE results have risen strongly since the last inspection, although there is some variation in standards between subjects. The progress that students make also varies. Generally students make satisfactory progress, and some groups, including higher attainers and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. These variations are linked to differences in the quality of teaching. While the majority of teaching is good or better, some is less effective at keeping you all engaged and learning well. In some lessons, a few students distract others from their learning. Some students' attendance is too low and some are late to lessons and school, which also has a negative effect on their learning and progress.

The headteacher and other leaders have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have been working effectively to raise its performance. There are some key areas in which the school needs to improve further.

- Ensure that you achieve consistently well across all subjects and key stages.
- Raise the proportion of good or better teaching by keeping you all engaged and helping you learn independently.
- Improve students' attendance and punctuality.

I hope that you will play your part in improving the school by attending regularly, turning up on time, and working hard in lessons. I wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hodgkinson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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