



Office for Standards
in Education

Inspection Report

HAZELWICK SCHOOL

Unique Reference Number: 126070

LEA: West Sussex

Inspection Dates: 08 – 10 June 2004
Reporting Inspector: HMI Christine Jones

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was
deemed section 12 (3) under the same act

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INTRODUCTION

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Hazelwick School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by five of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1	Very good
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Adequate
Grade 4	Not adequate

Description of the school

Hazelwick School is a large, mixed comprehensive school in Crawley that has 1861 pupils which includes 324 students in the sixth form. Most pupils enter the school with results from their middle schools that are slightly above average. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below the national average. Fewer pupils than usual have special educational needs. Almost 475 pupils come from a range of ethnic minority heritages and the majority speak English fluently. The school became a specialist school for technology in 1998.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

Effectiveness of the school

Hazelwick is an effective school. Pupils make very good progress in their first two years at Hazelwick, reaching high standards by the end of Key Stage 3. They make good progress when studying for their GCSEs and again reach high standards overall. The school has recently placed considerable emphasis on improving teaching and learning and this has helped to promote progress, particularly that of younger pupils. Pupils flourish in a secure and caring environment where there is considerable mutual respect between staff and pupils. Teaching is good and there is an ethos in the school of high expectations of pupils' achievement. Consequently, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their learning are very good. The commitment of the school's good leadership both to raising standards and promoting the personal development of the pupils has created a common sense of purpose amongst the staff.

Grade: 2

Effectiveness of the school's sixth form

The school judges that its sixth form is very effective. The evidence from this inspection, based on scrutiny of data and discussions with staff and a small number of students, indicates that it is effective with significant strengths. There were no lesson observations due to the time of year as all sixth form students were involved in examinations. Students enter the sixth form with above average results in their GCSE and the large majority achieve good or very good results in their advanced level examinations. However, some students who enter above or well above average do not do as well as they could and the school's expectations of them are not high enough. Performance data could be used more rigorously to set challenging targets for every student.

Students are very well supported and receive very good advice and guidance about their futures and most go on to higher education. There is good extra curricular provision. Resources adequately support students' learning, except for the library which does not meet the students' study needs. It is clear that, for the most part, students are provided with a good climate for learning. The sixth form is a large, vibrant academic institution and very few students leave before completing their courses.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The school has made good improvement with the issues raised in the last inspection and is aware of those areas that need further development, for example, the consistent and explicit monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. High standards at GCSE have been maintained and standards at Key Stage 3 have improved. The overall quality of teaching has improved. Gaining technology college status has led to improvements in accommodation and equipment and in standards in design technology and information and communication technology (ICT). It has also enabled the school to develop further links with, and provide facilities for, the local community.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is good. The good leadership at senior level has high aspirations for the school and accurately recognises the areas in which improvements are needed and knows what needs to be done. The school has the potential to become a very good school very quickly.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

The school is well placed to raise standards even higher through:

- Improving curriculum provision speedily to ensure appropriate provision for every learner.
- Ensuring all data are interpreted and used effectively so that all pupils and students reach their full potential.
- Improving standards in weaker subjects especially science.
- Putting in place consistent and thorough systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning across the school.
- Improving the library.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

Inspectors agree with the school that the standards achieved by pupils are good. Results are well above average with steady improvement over recent years, particularly at Key Stage 3, where the rate of progress is higher than the national rate. Because younger pupils are given challenging and interesting tasks, they are eager to learn, are inquisitive and want to develop new skills. They enjoy their learning. Consequently, by the end of Key Stage 3, they achieve standards which are well above those reached by pupils with similar starting points. They do particularly well in English, quite well in mathematics, but do not reach high enough standards in science. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress particularly in their spelling and reading skills.

Pupils are well equipped to tackle the demands of the GCSE and GNVQ courses, due mostly to a combination of good quality teaching and very good attitudes to learning. Examination results are well above average and improving in line with the national trend. Within this strong profile, the school is aware of a few subjects, such as science, where standards are weaker than they should be. Pupils achieve well regardless of their background but a small group of pupils could do better and fail to achieve any accreditation at GCSE. The school is taking steps to improve provision for all levels of ability. The capacity to improve standards further and meet the school's challenging targets is good. Achievement of sixth form students is good. In comparison with their GCSE results, most students achieve good or very good results in their advanced level examinations.

Grade: 2

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Attendance is good, pupils mostly attend school regularly and arrive on time to their lessons. The school is working with parents to improve the attendance of a small group of pupils who have had more frequent absences. As a result more of these pupils are attending school regularly. There is careful monitoring of any incidents and the use of exclusion. The number of temporary exclusions has decreased since the last inspection.

The school judges its pupils' personal development to be good. The evidence of this inspection is that it is very good. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes towards learning. They are highly interested learners who work hard and remain focused throughout lessons. They are eager to answer questions, to offer opinions and they work in a responsible manner when discussing issues with their peers. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Sixth form students make a significant contribution to the positive school climate. They act as good role models for the rest of the school, especially mentoring the youngest pupils when they first start school.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and a high priority is given to the importance of a healthy, active lifestyle. Pupils are confident and polite, relationships are very good and there is a most harmonious ethos throughout the school. The very good emphasis on pupils' personal development ensures that they develop the necessary social skills to enable them to become active members of the community.

Grade: 1

QUALITY OF PROVISION

The school rightly judges its quality of provision to be good overall. Teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Teaching in the majority of the lessons observed was good or very good; some of the weaker teaching observed was in classes with lower attaining pupils. The school has introduced a teaching and learning strategy that is beginning to have a positive impact on the range of teaching styles adopted.

Very good relationships between staff and pupils are a strong feature of lessons. Most lessons are thoroughly planned; have a clear purpose, and objectives are shared with pupils. Teachers have good knowledge of their subject and use a broad range of strategies that challenge pupils and involve them in the learning process. Where teaching is less effective, lessons do not build upon prior learning and pupils do not fully engage with the learning.

The school offers a wide range of out-of-class activities and visits in which there are high levels of participation and which make a positive contribution to pupils' subject understanding and their social and cultural development. They enhance the curriculum considerably and teachers give generously of their time in support of these.

The school has made good efforts to address issues related to the quality of assessment identified in the previous inspection. Good use is made of the assessment of pupils' performance to set individual learning improvement targets. This is most effective in Key Stage 4, where pupils are aware of how they are expected to perform and what they need to do to achieve this. The day-to-day marking of pupils' work varies in frequency and quality across subjects. In some subjects, information from assessment is used very well and both staff and pupils are aware of what they have to do to make progress. Parents are kept fully informed of pupils' progress through a regular and effective reporting system.

The balanced and broad curriculum reported in the previous inspection remains in place and this meets the needs of most pupils. The school has well advanced plans to develop an online curriculum for the Year 7 pupils starting school in September and intends to extend this throughout the school in subsequent years. The school is committed to developing the use of ICT throughout the curriculum. However, practice in subjects varies considerably.

Most pupils cope well with the demands of a nine or ten GCSE curriculum. The school has made some efforts to provide an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in Key Stage 4 but recognises there is a mismatch between the curriculum and the needs and interests of the least able and least motivated learners. The vocational pathway that has been developed is going some way towards meeting the needs of all these pupils. The school is developing links with the local college to provide targeted pupils with relevant courses and is using extended work placements, although these are on a small scale at present. In the sixth form a wide range of subjects are offered at GCSE, AS and A2 level. The provision does not cater widely for the less academic students but almost all find suitable courses of further education at local colleges.

The school is a very caring community which has the welfare, health and safety of pupils at its heart. There is a most effective pastoral system which works closely with parents and supports pupils' academic learning and their personal development well. The recognition and celebration of achievement is a central part of this system and this is valued by pupils. Procedures for ensuring pupils safety are applied consistently; they feel safe, and they are equipped with the skills and understanding needed to ensure their own health and safety both in school and in the wider community.

Pupils with special educational needs and pupils at the early stages of learning English are supported effectively both in lessons and at other times by teachers and assistants. The support provided by the medical team, including the counsellor, is valued by pupils. The school seeks additional support from external agencies as necessary.

Grade: 2

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school, including its governance, are good overall. The leadership team works hard to establish a clear vision and raise expectations through a well-focused emphasis on developing teaching. This has been successfully communicated to the staff and creates a common sense of purpose.

Senior managers of the school know their colleagues and the pupils well. They have an accurate view of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and are keen to seek improvement. Good use is made of annual departmental reviews to judge progress although insufficient use is made of direct observation of classroom practice to improve learning. Performance management is firmly embedded into the culture of the school and is well linked to the professional development of the staff. There is a thorough and effective induction programme for both newly qualified teachers and more experienced staff who are new to the school.

The day to day management of the sixth form is efficient and effective. High expectations of the students create a purposeful academic ethos. However, there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching in sixth form lessons.

Substantial amounts of data are generated by the school to analyse pupils' performance. Fullest use is not yet made of this information. For example, the additional support for pupils with special educational needs is not evaluated in terms of its impact on improving their learning, and in the sixth form data is not always used well to set challenging targets for some students. School development planning gives a clear guide on the responsibilities of each member of the senior group and their roles in moving the school forward. However, links between whole school planning and that of individual departments are inconsistent and departmental planning is not always sufficiently focused on developing learning and raising standards further.

The school is very committed to providing an inclusive environment. Very strong pastoral systems ensure the pupils thrive and this supportive atmosphere encourages them to develop a good commitment to learning. This is supported by good links with parents and outside agencies.

Management of the school's finances and resources continues to be effective and the school provides good value for money. Accommodation and staffing are both appropriate to the needs of the curriculum, although the library is inadequate to serve the needs of this large school, especially the sixth form. The well kept and pleasant grounds contribute to the overall positive learning environment and they are treated with respect by the pupils.

The evidence of this inspection supports the school's judgement that leadership and management are good.

Grade: 2

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