



Woodbridge High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102854
LEA Redbridge LEA
Inspection number 276783
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Michael Chisnall HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	St Barnabas Road
School category	Community		Woodford Green
Age range of pupils	11 to 19		Essex IG8 7DQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02085049618
Number on roll	1425	Fax number	02085590487
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr R Hoskins
Date of previous inspection	27 September 1999	Headteacher	Mr Andrew Beaumont

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 19	12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	276783

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Woodbridge High is a large, oversubscribed secondary school that includes a sixth form of 257 students. It is designated as having a specialism in business, enterprise and languages. When they join the school, pupils' skills are broadly average but overall they represent the full range of ability. The school serves a culturally diverse community and nearly half its pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. Around one in five pupils speaks English as an additional language, rising to almost one in three in the sixth form. However, few of them are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a school that is effective in providing a good standard of education and good value for money. This is how the school sees itself and inspectors agree. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Standards are good and rising; pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. Those pupils who need extra help with their work do particularly well. The school and parents recognise that achievement in science and modern foreign languages is not as good as in other subjects because of long term staff vacancies. This is being resolved and pupils are catching up. The catalyst for rising standards is the particularly effective leadership group and the excellent leadership of the headteacher. Between them, they have created an atmosphere in which pupils' learning is paramount and a culture in which every child really matters. This drive for success is not yet consistent at subject department level where planning for improvement is insufficiently focused on pupils' learning potential. Nevertheless, school leaders have successfully brought about improvements to learning and teaching, which are good overall. They are active in securing consistency in the quality of learning across all subjects but there is still room for improvement. The school is successful in providing a curriculum that meets pupils' needs well. It is enriched with elements such as business and enterprise activities, which help pupils prepare for the world of work. Pupils are well supported, particularly within year groups, and are helped to live in a safe and healthy way. As a result of this, and of good teaching, they behave well and show positive attitudes to school. Their enjoyment is tangible. They are ready and willing to take responsibility within the school but there are as yet not enough opportunities for them to do this. Given the rapid improvements being made and the good support offered by the governing body, there is a very strong capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form is effective in providing its students with a good quality education that meets their varying needs well. This is how the school sees the sixth form. There is a good balance between academic and vocational courses. Standards of achievement are improving and are now good. There is a clear view of where improvements need to be made and the leadership of the sixth form is active in making sure they take place.

What the school should do to improve further

* raise the quality of learning and teaching in all subjects to the level of the best* ensure that planning for subject improvement consistently focuses on the impact expected on pupils' learning and achievement* improve the range of opportunities for pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 to show responsibility within the school community.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average. There have been recent and significant improvements in national test and examination results at the end of Years 9 and 11 and in the sixth form. Pupils in Key Stage 3 make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. In English and mathematics, progress is especially good with results exceeding the demanding targets set for pupils. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress and meet their similarly challenging targets. Good progress is made by pupils on their GCSE courses and standards are above average in Year 11. The recent improvement in results is, in part, due to the effective use made of the information the school keeps on pupils' progress to set challenging targets. Their progress against such targets is carefully checked. In the 2005 GCSE examinations no group of pupils underachieved; indeed, both higher and lower ability pupils tended to do better than was forecast, with most middle ability pupils gaining their target grades. The school acknowledges this outcome and is evaluating how even better results might be gained in 2006. Results in the sixth form show much recent improvement and A level results are now above average, with more students gaining the highest grades. This represents good progress and the achievement of students is good. Students performed particularly well in a number of subjects including English, mathematics, business, history and psychology.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' and students' personal development and well-being are good. Their moral, social and cultural developments are strong. As a result, relationships within the school are very secure and learners of all ages get on well with each other and with adults. They are courteous and move around the site in a sensible manner. They value the cultural and ethnic diversity of the school community and many take the opportunity to learn a wide range of community languages. Spiritual development is satisfactory, with time for individual reflection in year group assemblies. Most enjoy their education. This is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Pupils appreciate the calm atmosphere of the school and feel secure. One pupil commented, 'There is no reason not to feel safe here' Pupils and students are aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and the school council has been responsible for the introduction of some healthier products in the school canteen. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not given enough opportunity to promote a fully healthy lifestyle as there is not enough time for physical education. This is being addressed by the school this year. The 'Trust'n'Tell' peer-mentoring, anti-bullying scheme is a very good opportunity for some pupils and students to take responsibility. However, for many there are insufficient formal opportunities to take other responsibility within the school community. Pupils and students are successfully enabled to develop their business and enterprise skills through a range of activities and work experience; they are well prepared for the world of work. Attendance is better than at the last inspection and is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Learning and teaching are good overall and enable pupils and students to achieve well. The school is working hard to ensure that teaching is consistently good in all subjects, particularly in science and modern foreign languages where parents recognise that provision has been less strong. There are good relationships between staff and pupils and the latter confirm that they enjoy learning. This was seen in the lessons that inspectors visited, where pupils were attentive and interested, responding well to their teachers' good questioning in class discussions. Teachers know their subjects well and plan carefully. Where teaching has less impact, so that progress is slower, pupils do not always work on activities that are appropriate to their ability. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to enable pupils to show more initiative in their work. Good systems are in place so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Some teachers mark work very well and involve pupils in assessing their own learning, but this practice is not yet sufficiently consistent. Learning support assistants effectively support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Learning and teaching in the sixth form are good. Lessons provide good challenges for students that make them think and there is a range of teaching styles that engage students well. Sometimes, students are not clear enough about how they can make better progress because there is some inconsistency with which targets are set for them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets requirements but goes well beyond these and provides pupils with a good range of other experiences. It is particularly effective in meeting pupils' needs and giving them the skills they need to enter the world of work or further and higher education. For example, the life skills course enables pupils to develop their personal and social skills well. The school's business, enterprise and language status means that it is able to give pupils a good grounding in the economic facts of life. There is a wide range of options open to pupils in Key Stage 4, including several modern foreign languages. The options open to pupils mean that there is good provision for a variety of pathways leading to qualifications as well as useful work experience opportunities. There are good strategies in place to help pupils in Year 11 make the transition to the sixth form, including help with managing personal study time. The school is actively restructuring the curriculum to ensure more time for physical education. The curriculum in the sixth form has been improved considerably since the last inspection. It is now good and meets students' needs well, evidenced by the growing demand for places. The balance between vocational and academic courses is particularly good and provides students with a variety of study options, some of which might lead to further levels of study. In addition, the opportunity for community service means that all students are able to make a contribution to the school or local

community. There is an appropriate range of after school and lunchtime clubs which enables pupils to follow special skills or interests. This range is now enriched by the inclusion of musical opportunities. The enrichment programme in the sixth form is particularly strong with opportunities such as horse riding, rock climbing and Bollywood dancing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support Pupils and students are cared for well. A very strong pastoral system promotes their academic and personal progress, and a safe environment in which to learn. Pupils and students agree the school supports them very well and are particularly appreciative of the regular 'academic review' days. These are well managed by the year coordinators and form tutors. Pupils are fully involved in their target setting and know what they have to do to meet them. Pupils have someone to talk with should they feel the need to discuss personal matters. This includes peer mentors as well as adults in the school. Support for pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is very strong and contributes well to their academic and personal progress. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language meets their needs. The school keeps accurate, computerised records of pupils' and students' progress. This is used well in the academic review days to set targets and help them improve their work. Pupils and students receive good advice and guidance to help them with course choices both in school and beyond; effective careers advice also plays an important role.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. However, the leadership provided by the headteacher and leadership group is excellent. This is because they have a relentless focus on learning and are effective in bringing about improvements to pupils' achievements since the last inspection and particularly in recent years. They successfully provide a very consistent steer to the work of the school and maintain a high profile presence in its daily life. Pupils know that expectations are high and they rise to meet them. The school successfully includes all groups of pupils in its work and is taking effective steps to ensure that achievement for all is as good as the best. The school is managed very well so that there is a clear understanding about who does what. Very good systems are in place to check how well both staff teach and pupils learn and to tackle identified weaknesses. Pupils have noticed how teaching has improved and value the consistency with which they are taught and treated. Management of the sixth form and subject departments is good overall and is effective in improving the quality of learning and teaching that is provided. There is not enough attention given to expected gains in pupils' learning and achievement when planning for subject improvement. The governing body is effective in its work; it supports the school well. It knows the school's strengths and weaknesses and is active in checking how well it is doing. These checking systems do not yet include strategies for finding out pupils'

views or ways of linking consistently with the work of individual departments. Resources are deployed well to ensure that subject departments are now adequately staffed. This has been a priority for the governing body, leadership group and heads of department.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome we received when we visited your school recently. We appreciated the opportunity of meeting with some of you and talking with you in lessons. You were very helpful to inspectors in telling us your views. This is what we found about your school:

* It is a good school and getting even better* Most of you do very well in your learning and make good progress, especially if you need extra help* You haven't been getting a good enough deal in science and modern foreign languages because of staffing shortages in these subjects. There are permanent staff now and things are improving* You work hard, behave well and enjoy coming to school; because of these good attitudes to school, your school is a good place to learn. You are responsible young people and ready to take on more responsibilities around the school. We have asked that the staff help you do this* Most of your lessons are good; we have asked your headteacher to carry on working hard to make sure that all of them are as good as each other and that you always get work to do that challenges you* We think that the range of subjects, courses and other activities in the school is interesting and gives you lots of choice, especially as you get older* We were very impressed with how well the school is led; your headteacher and leadership group are really working hard to make sure that you are treated well and learn as much as you can.

I spoke with several pupils or students who had joined the school after Year 7 or in Year 12. They said how much they like being at Woodbridge and how welcome they were made to feel by pupils and adults. That is something to be very proud of. Congratulations!The team joins me in wishing you all the best for the future.