



# Windsor High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103874  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 277018  
**Inspection dates** 31 January 2006 to 1 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Hodgkinson AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Richmond Street
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Halesowen
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		West Midlands B63 4BB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 5501452
<b>Number on roll</b>	1369	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 5850610
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr Colin White
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Keith Sorrell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	31 January 2006 - 1 February 2006	277018

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by six Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Windsor High is a large specialist sports school in a town close to the south- western edge of Birmingham. The area is socially mixed and is not particularly advantaged or disadvantaged, and the backgrounds of the pupils reflect this. Schools and the college in the town are increasing their collaborative work as part of the Halesowen Consortium to broaden curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils and to improve the professional development of staff.

Windsor High became a training school in 2004 and works closely with teacher training organisations and university departments to develop and accredit those working to become teachers. The school has won a number of key awards in recent years, linked in part to its specialist work in sport, health and staff development.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school's own view that its effectiveness is good, and that it has a number of outstanding features.

Pupils make good progress, because they join the school with broadly average standards and leave with GCSE results that are significantly above average. Progress is particularly strong for lower attaining pupils and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. These pupils benefit in particular from the school's excellent systems to support, guide and care for all. In terms of examination results, higher attainers make less rapid progress than other groups. While teaching is good with methods that stimulate much enjoyment among pupils, teachers' planning does not always focus sufficiently on the right level of challenge for higher attainers. However, the school's good curriculum with its excellent enrichment opportunities ensures that wider skills of leadership, initiative and team-working are very well developed for all groups of pupils, and equip them well for later life. The development of these exciting aspects of the curriculum has partly arisen from the school's outstanding work in partnership with other schools, colleges, businesses, clubs and community organisations. Specialist sports college status has also helped to provide many excellent opportunities for pupils, encouraging them to develop very strong awareness of healthy living, safe practices, and the importance of strong contribution to community activities. However, some elements of the basic curriculum in religious education, information and communication technology (ICT) and citizenship, need further development in order to ensure a high quality of provision throughout.

The school is well led and managed, with very strong vision from the headteacher and leadership team. They have developed outstanding self-evaluation procedures, which have ensured that the school continually moves forward. There is a very strong capacity to improve. The school gives good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the rate of progress of higher attainers to match that of other groups, and ensure that teachers plan activities that offer them sufficient challenge.
- Improve the quality of the basic curriculum, specifically in religious education in Years 10 and 11, and improve procedures to check that pupils make good progress in those elements of citizenship and information and communication technology (ICT) taught within other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well, and generally meet the appropriately challenging targets set for them. They join the school in Year 7 with standards that are broadly average, although there are more higher attaining pupils than would be found in schools nationally. They leave with GCSE results that are significantly above average, representing good progress

across Years 7-11. Pupils' national test results at the end of Year 9 are significantly better than average, showing that they make a good start to their secondary education. This is particularly so in English, partly because of the excellent accelerated literacy programme for those with weaknesses in reading and writing on entry to the school. While Year 9 test results overall have kept pace with the national rate of increase, results in mathematics are not as far ahead of the national average as they used to be, reflecting a high turnover of staff in the subject and consequent lack of continuity of teaching.

Lower attaining pupils do particularly well at GCSE and GNVQ. No pupils leave without a GCSE or GNVQ pass. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make exceptionally good progress during their time in school. Higher attainers make satisfactory but less rapid progress than other groups, and the proportion of pupils gaining the highest grades A\*-A is broadly average. Standards in sport and physical education are high, reflecting well on the school's specialist provision in this area.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good overall, and there are some outstanding features. Pupils are proud of their school and they are mature, sensible and well behaved students. Relationships are outstanding. There is a real sense of teamwork and mutual respect between pupils and all staff. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and life in school.

The school's specialist sports status has clear benefits for the pupils. It leads the field in its promotion of healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils make well informed choices about fitness, diet and health, and the school supports this very effectively through sports and games provision. The girls' golf team is an example of the school's many successes in widening choice and opportunity to help the pupils achieve well.

Pupils also develop good skills of leadership and decision making and they show initiative clearly. Such skills equip them well for later life. The class, house and school councils give pupils good opportunities to make their thoughts and ideas known. Pupils say they are listened to carefully and that positive action is taken to follow up concerns. Although a small minority of parents have worries over pupil behaviour and bullying, the school takes decisive action to prevent harassment and the pupils say they do not feel threatened.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their social and moral development is a particular strength and is enhanced considerably by the valuable contribution that pupils make to the community by charitable fund raising, concert giving and hosting fairs and other events. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory, but is constrained by a lack of curriculum time for religious education in Years 10 and 11 and too little spiritual reflection in assemblies and tutor time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. One parent wrote that 'staff appear to invest a lot of passion and enthusiasm into pupils', and there is evident enjoyment of learning in many of the lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and accurately diagnose their strengths and weaknesses through good assessment. This helps teachers to plan well in most respects. Lessons are often lively and varied, and include the regular use of computers. Pupils are frequently encouraged to work in teams and to show initiative by taking responsibility for organising their learning. Teachers get pupils to think about the quality of their work by encouraging them to assess and evaluate their own work and the work of others, and there are some outstanding examples of the effectiveness of this approach in physical education. Pupils develop real confidence in articulating their views clearly in group discussions. Behaviour is mostly very good in lessons, but can deteriorate where teachers are less experienced and show less clear expectations of pupils in managing their classes.

Regular, good quality homework is marked up to date with helpful and supportive comments, which identify clearly how pupils can improve their work.

There are many instances of outstanding teaching where the work set challenges all pupils, including the most able and those with learning difficulties. However, in some cases teachers do not plan well enough to sustain the level of challenge for more able pupils throughout the lesson. Where there are 'extension activities' for higher attainers they feature too late in the lesson and more able pupils spend too much time on completing work designed for the whole class, which does not challenge them enough.

This was evident in some mathematics lessons in Years 7 to 9 where high attaining pupils had to wait too long to attempt the more difficult questions.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's curriculum is good overall with excellent provision for sport and recreational activities developed through its specialist status. In particular, pupils benefit greatly from the emphasis on healthy living and the promotion of self-confidence and leadership qualities. The school works well within the Halesowen Consortium to develop its curriculum. There is now a very broad programme of applied and vocational courses and enrichment activities in Years 10 and 11. This allows pupils to follow their interests and aptitudes and gain useful skills for future work and leisure.

For those who do not opt to take a GCSE in religious education there is very little coverage of the subject in Years 10 and 11, and limited time for lessons in citizenship and personal and social education. Significant elements of the curriculum for citizenship and for ICT in Years 7 and 8 are taught as part of other subjects, and the school's

monitoring of the quality of this provision is not as effective as its monitoring of quality elsewhere.

The curriculum is mostly well matched to the needs of pupils. The accelerated literacy programme in Year 7 improves the skills of lower attainers and there is a fast track to GCSE for able pupils in mathematics. In addition, there is a wealth of extra-curricular activities in sports, music, drama and clubs, which are exceptionally well supported by pupils, as well as a special enrichment programme for the gifted and talented. Extensive international links provide excellent opportunities for pupils to travel abroad. One parent wrote to tell inspectors how grateful parents were that 'so many staff are willing to give up their own time after school to do clubs or help children with work if they're stuck'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, support and guidance for pupils are outstanding. Pastoral leaders, adult and peer mentors provide a comprehensive network of support and are central to this provision. The carefully planned House system is a very positive feature that underpins all aspects of school life. In discussion with inspectors, Year 11 pupils said how very well supported they felt by friendly and approachable staff. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are given high priority. Staff are alert to the requirements for child protection and receive annual training to help them keep fully up to date. Potential risks are checked regularly. The school supports its most vulnerable learners extremely well. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is outstanding and is reflected in the excellent progress they make.

A range of expertise and information is available to pupils in Years 10 and 11 to assist them in making well informed choices about their further education, training or work placement. Personal improvement plans, which include individual targets, work very successfully to support both the academic and social development of pupils in Years 10 and 11.

The school rightly intends to extend their use to Years 7, 8 and 9 to support a range of measures being introduced, which will enable still closer checks to be made on pupils' academic progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features including the quality of their self-evaluation. The school invests considerable time and effort in rigorous analysis of its work and leadership training at school and departmental level. Leaders listen to and act on the views of pupils, parents and other stakeholders. Senior teachers monitor teaching and learning rigorously and offer much support and training for other teachers. These processes have been significant factors in an improvement in overall standards and sustained high achievement since the last inspection.

The headteacher sets a clear example of 'excellence for all' through his openness and unwillingness to settle for anything less than the best. He is ably supported by a strong senior team. Together, they have used innovative methods to sustain the school's drive for improvement and overcome barriers. For example, financial constraints have made it difficult to recruit and retain teachers in mathematics, and this has slowed the rate of improvement in the subject. This problem is compounded by the school's low funding relative to schools in neighbouring areas. The school's development as a training school and its implementation of national changes to improve the management of school staff are addressing the problem by ensuring that specialist teachers are in place to teach the subject. The school has made generally satisfactory progress on the key issues identified at the last inspection, and there has been a significant improvement in the quality of overall curriculum planning. Some concerns remain, however, about some elements of the basic curriculum, and about improving learning for the more able in lessons. The school's specialist designation has been very well led and managed to bring about high standards and high levels of participation in sport.

Governors have a very good knowledge of the school. They use their expertise to establish robust procedures and support its work. They challenge senior managers and hold them to account well.

Financial procedures are very sound. Nevertheless, the school does not meet statutory requirements in the provision of religious education in Years 10 and 11 and a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.



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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Many thanks for welcoming us when we visited your school. We were very impressed by the mature way in which pupils of all ages were so willing and able to give us their views about the school, both during formal and informal discussions. This says a lot about the highly effective way in which the school is helping to prepare you with the confidence and skills you will need for later life.

Like you, we think that Windsor is a good school, which has some outstanding features. Pupils clearly make good progress and get good examination results, but also develop vital skills of team-working, leadership and initiative. The way in which the school encourages all of you to recognise the need for safe and healthy living and to participate in active lifestyles is quite exceptional. It is really good to see that so many of you get involved in the very large range of activities on offer.

In discussion with us, you made it clear how much you valued your teachers' excellent care and support in providing you with a good quality of education. The headteacher and other school leaders have very effective systems in place to ensure that the school maintains and improves such high standards.

We have asked the school to take some actions to improve still further. Firstly, we think that in a number of lessons, teachers need to plan more challenging activities for the more able pupils. Secondly, the school needs to ensure that pupils in Years 10 and 11 get more religious education, and check that pupils learn well enough in citizenship and ICT when they are taught as part of other subjects.

Once again, thank you for your help, and good wishes for the future.