



# Queen Elizabeth School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112438  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278932  
**Inspection dates** 19 September 2005 to 20 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mary Sewell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Kirkby Lonsdale
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		Carnforth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Lancashire, LA6 2HJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 271275
<b>Number on roll</b>	1387	<b>Fax number</b>	01524 272863
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Ty Power
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher Clarke

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Queen Elizabeth School is a large comprehensive school with Performing Arts College status, educating 1,387 pupils aged 11 to 18. It serves the small, attractive and pleasant town of Kirkby Lonsdale, which is an area of social and economic advantage. Most pupils are of white British descent. The standards attained by the pupils entering school at age 11 are average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

This is an outstanding school which gives excellent value for money. Parents, pupils and members of the community rate the school very highly. The vast majority of pupils, regardless of background, make very good progress throughout the school; they reach their full potential as individuals and achieve high standards. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent and contribute to the very high quality of lessons. Pupils enjoy school; they feel safe and cared for and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The school works very well with other schools and colleges, local employers and the church to ensure that pupils not only achieve well academically but also grow in their personal development and gain confidence. They become mature, articulate and reflective young people, secure in their values, and are well prepared for their future education, careers and adult life. The school knows itself well and its view of its performance as highly effective matches the inspectors' evaluation. The governing body, headteacher and leadership team set a vision for improvement which is realised through very effective management. The school has excellent capacity to improve further. Since the last inspection, the computer facilities have vastly improved, as has the quality of the teaching of religious education. The school is currently working successfully to raise the standards achieved by boys. However, the school is still unable to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils because it has insufficient space for this.

not applicable

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

This excellent school has no major areas for improvement. It needs only to continue to maintain its high standards and to ensure that all pupils have every opportunity to maximise their potential.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are very high and pupils make excellent overall progress. Pupils begin Year 7 with standards which are broadly average. They make rapid progress so that standards by the end of Year 9 are well above average for pupils of their age. The results of the national tests in mathematics, science and English were well above average in 2004 and even higher in 2005. The pupils continue their progress in Years 10 and 11 and they achieve well above average results in general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) examinations, with many pupils achieving the highest possible grades. The standards achieved in science are particularly high in most years although they dipped slightly in 2005.

The school has few pupils with special educational needs but these pupils benefit from first-rate teaching and their own excellent attitudes to learning. Consequently, they

make good progress and do as well as could be expected of them despite considerable learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Standards in the sixth form are well above average and the students achieve exceptionally well. Standards are high in all subjects and 50 per cent of the GCE A-level grades are A or B. As in the lower school, standards are particularly high in science subjects. Standards are also particularly high in the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) course in music, in which the students are articulate, enthusiastic and enjoy their studies immensely. Sixth form students organise and produce theatrical and musical events to a professional standard, for example, a full-cast production of *Les Miserables*, and the leadership of the school's orchestra.

Throughout the school, including the sixth form, teachers are working hard and successfully to raise the boys' achievement to equal that of the girls. As a direct result of what the school is doing to achieve this, the boys' GCSE results have been rising more quickly than those of the girls.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils greatly enjoy school and have very positive attitudes towards their work. Their behaviour is exemplary, both in and out of lessons, and they show respect for their teachers and courtesy towards one another. Pupils feel safe in school and rare incidences of bullying are swiftly dealt with. They learn the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, for example, healthy eating and keeping fit, and participate in sport and outdoor activities enthusiastically. They are taught about the dangers to health of smoking, and of the abuse of drugs and alcohol. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community, for example, by helping to care for elderly residents. A comprehensive careers guidance programme, which includes work-related learning, ensures that pupils are well prepared for adult life. Attendance is close to, but slightly above average with very little unauthorised absence. The school is working closely with parents to raise the attendance rate further and to raise their awareness that absence hinders their children's progress.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The headteacher and senior managers have worked hard to improve the quality of lessons. They have done this through rigorous evaluation of teaching and elimination of faults. This process has been highly effective. Excellent teaching, combined with pupils' highly positive attitudes, and enjoyment of learning, underpins their exceptional progress. Pupils in Years 10 and 11, in particular, appreciate the increased demands which their teachers make on them to take responsibility for their own learning. The characteristic strengths

of the teaching are high expectations, challenging learning activities and excellent classroom relationships. As an example of what was seen during the inspection, an inspirational religious education lesson for Year 8 pupils captivated them and generated a high level of interest which ensured their excellent progress in understanding of the importance of the gospels to Christianity.

Routine assessments, such as marking of pupils' written work, are consistent across subject departments and very effectively ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's curriculum is excellent and is enriched through the specialist status of a Performing Arts College. This specialist status adds considerably to the breadth of pupils' learning experiences in Years 7 to 9 and provides a wealth of optional examination courses for older pupils and sixth form students. The performing arts and wide range of sporting activities feature strongly in the impressive range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. The school provides a curriculum which responds to local needs and includes work-related courses which reflect the local economy, as well as the interests and aptitudes of individual pupils. The broad and distinctive curriculum ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities and has helped considerably to ensure the achievement of all groups of pupils. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. A very strong thread of community involvement also runs through the curriculum and extra-curricular provision.

At the previous inspection, the time given for religious education in Years 10 and 11 was below the national average. This is still the case, but improved teaching of the subject and a well-organised programme of lessons now ensures that the subject is increasingly popular with pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides outstanding care and support for pupils which has a very considerable bearing on their well-being, academic progress and their personal development. The youngest pupils speak highly of the arrangements which help them settle to the new expectations and demands of secondary school.

Child protection requirements and procedures are clear and understood by all staff, and links with outside agencies ensure that pupils at risk receive specialist support. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and are confident that incidences of bullying or harassment are dealt with firmly and effectively. They feel their views are listened to and respected, and that they can discuss any issues of concern with staff. The health and safety procedures are properly underpinned by risk assessments, enabling pupils to undertake a wide range of activities, both on and off the school's premises.

The systems for monitoring all pupils' academic and personal development are very effective in identifying potentially vulnerable or underachieving pupils or those with learning difficulties. Careers education and guidance are excellent, helping pupils to make well-informed decisions about their futures. Reports to parents are exemplary and are typical of the school's efforts to involve them in all matters relating to their children's progress and welfare.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school's progress, shared by staff and governors, so that all pupils reach their potential and high standards are sustained. The school's resources are managed very efficiently, with an emphasis on securing value for money.

This is a school which has excellent understanding of its own strengths and areas for improvement. The identification of priorities for development comes from rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and other provision. This monitoring involves all staff. Subjects of the curriculum which appear not to do as well as others are quickly identified by senior staff who work closely with subject leaders to put in place the necessary strategies to improve the teaching.

Parents, governors and other stakeholders are also involved in refining this system of self-evaluation to make the school even more effective. Consultation with parents and surveys of their views influence management decisions and the outcomes of these act as a catalyst for improvement.

The development of the school as a Performing Arts College has been a great success and pupils have benefited from the additional resources available, such as professional role models. Boys, in particular, have found newly discovered talents and have developed new skills.

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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>	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

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

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

<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**

Queen Elizabeth School

Kirkby Lonsdale

Carnforth

Lancashire, LA6 2HJ

21 September 2005

Dear pupils and sixth form students,

Thank you all so much for contributing to the recent inspection of your school, particularly to those amongst you who took the time to speak to us in interviews or just informally in the recreation areas. You will be delighted to know that the inspectors found that your school is outstanding. Your school is led by an excellent headteacher who is helped by the school governors, all teachers, pupils and students.

We found that you all make considerable progress in your learning and reach high standards. There are many reasons why you do so well at school. The teaching is excellent and your teachers plan exciting and challenging lessons. The inspectors also found that you were offered a great deal of choice of subjects and that many of you choose drama, art, dance, music and media studies.

We were very pleased to see that you were keen to participate in the numerous clubs and sports activities. I particularly enjoyed my visit to the Landscape Club and I do hope those bulbs grow! We noticed that many of you took the healthy eating option at lunchtime and this again told us a lot about your school and the way in which you have developed into mature individuals who are making wise choices.

The most important reason why you are doing so well is really down to you! You behave very well, and have excellent relationships with your teachers and with each other. You all look very smart and businesslike, and most importantly, come to school ready to work hard and do well.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Sewell

Annex B