



Shoeburyness High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115210
LEA SOUTHEND-ON-SEA LEA
Inspection number 279541
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 17 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Jennifer Brown LI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Caulfield Road
School category	Community		SS3 9LL
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01702292286
Number on roll	1562	Fax number	01702292333
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Graham Hill
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Susan Murphy

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	16 November 2005 - 17 November 2005	279541

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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

Shoeburyness High School is a mixed comprehensive school in a borough with four selective grammar schools. The school roll has increased since the time of the last inspection and is larger than average. Some parts of the area the school serves are deprived. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. Over 94% of the pupils come from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average although the number who have learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school became a specialist Technology College in 1999 and was re-designated in 2003. It became a Training School in 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and progress, particularly in English and in science. Examination results have fallen over the last four years. Standards of attainment are low, particularly in English and science where they are inadequate. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but the rate of progress varies between subjects. Progress is inadequate in English throughout the school and in science between the ages of 14 and 16. Higher ability pupils make inadequate progress, particularly in English and science. Inspectors agree with the school's assessment that it is not equipping pupils with the basic skills in literacy and numeracy that they need for future life and the world of work. Standards of attainment in the sixth form are satisfactory and pupils achieve satisfactory progress given their starting points. The school has had two changes of headteacher since the last inspection. Improvement has been satisfactory overall although slow in science and inadequate in English. Problems with staff recruitment have had a negative effect on the quality of teaching, and on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Staffing has been stabilised through the school obtaining Training School status. The new headteacher has been in post for just under a year and is leading the school well. Senior managers have been broadly accurate in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have increased the pace at which improvements are being driven forward. Their strong focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has reduced the amount of inadequate teaching. During the last year the attendance and behaviour of pupils have improved. Although the school has strengthened its systems for tracking and monitoring pupil progress, it has not been analysing some key performance measures, so managers have not been sufficiently effective in raising pupil achievement. Effective action has been taken to reduce the school's deficit budget. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The school judged the effectiveness of the sixth form to be good. Inspectors judged its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory with some good features. The sixth form curriculum is satisfactory and has been broadened to meet the needs of students. Standards and achievement in the sixth form are satisfactory overall. Many sixth form students embark on advanced level courses with relatively modest GCSE grades and make good progress on vocational courses. Although standards are low in the more traditional academic subjects, students make satisfactory progress. Levels of retention are improving. Students are enthusiastic about their experience in the sixth form and are well motivated. They make a positive contribution to the school community and are good role models for younger pupils. They receive good support and guidance

both to improve their academic performance and to help them make decisions about the next stage of their career. The sixth form is well led and effectively managed.

What the school should do to improve further

Focus on: - raising standards and progress in English throughout the school by improving the quality of teaching and learning and through the effective use of data to track and monitor pupil progress - improving the progress of pupils in science in Years 10 and 11 by applying the successful intervention process used in the lower school - improving the progress of higher ability pupils, particularly in English and science, by ensuring teachers are accurately able to determine the levels at which pupils are working and have high expectations of their future performance - improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills - undertaking more rigorous analysis, tracking and monitoring of pupil performance throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Grade for sixth form: 3

The school judges achievement and standards as inadequate overall. Inspectors agree that standards are too low and that there is significant underachievement, notably in English and science. Pupils enter the school aged 11 with broadly average standards, although there are fewer pupils with higher levels in English and mathematics than in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall by the end of Year 9, but there is inconsistency between subjects. Progress in mathematics was good in 2004, satisfactory and improving in science but inadequate in English. A significant proportion of higher ability pupils underachieve in national tests in English and science and attain levels at age 14 which are no higher than those they reached at age 11. Pupils who have learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. Although the most recent test results show some improvement in English and science, the gap between the school's performance and that seen nationally is not being reduced. Results in GCSE examinations are below the national average and standards of attainment are not rising as quickly as they should and showed no overall improvement in 2005. The percentage of pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades has deteriorated over the last four years. The school was disappointed that its success in reducing the number of pupils who fail to gain any GCSE passes was reversed in 2005 because of the poor attendance of a significant number of pupils who were late entrants to the school. Standards in some subjects such as geography, child development and statistics are closer to the national average and in drama are good. Pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in these subjects and broadly satisfactory progress overall through Years 10 and 11. However, achievement is inadequate in English and science. Standards and achievement in the sixth form are satisfactory overall. Standards of attainment are good in advanced vocational course and students achieve well. Standards of attainment are low in the more traditional GCE A level and AS courses but students make satisfactory progress given their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school judges the personal development and well-being of pupils as good overall, and outstanding in the sixth form. Inspectors judged it to be satisfactory with some good features and good in the sixth form. Most pupils enjoy lessons and the opportunities the school provides, although the attitude of a minority of pupils hinders learning in some lessons. Relationships are particularly good in the sixth form where students are increasing in self-knowledge and self-confidence. Behaviour and attendance are satisfactory and improving. However, pupils and parents are rightly concerned over the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of pupils in lessons and around the school. The new Behaviour Management Procedure is dramatically reducing the need to exclude pupils. Pupils' social, moral, and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory and being improved through developments such as the appointment of a school chaplain. The numbers of pupils involved in sport has increased significantly due to the impact of the School Sport Co-ordinator Initiative and pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to school life, for instance, by taking part in the school council or acting as mentors for younger pupils. Most children feel that the school provides a safe environment for them and think that swift and effective action is taken when incidents of bullying occur. Pupils demonstrate an appreciation of health and safety issues within lessons. Pupils are adequately prepared for working life through well organised work experience and effective careers guidance which helps them to make informed choices about the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Recent actions to improve the quality of teaching have been successful and there is some evidence to indicate the increased focus on learning is having a positive effect. However, there are inconsistencies and variability in performance across the school and within departments. While there are examples of much good and a small amount of outstanding practice, some remains inadequate. The better teaching is challenging. Teachers plan activities well and employ skilful questioning to involve the pupils fully in their learning. In the sixth form, teaching in vocational subjects strongly promotes independent learning and students are effectively supported by thorough assessment and review of their progress. Lack of continuity in staffing, particularly in English, mathematics and science, has resulted in some pupils losing interest in their learning. The disaffection shown by these pupils is not consistently dealt with in weaker lessons. Not all teachers make it clear to pupils what they expect from them in terms of high standards of behaviour and achievement nor provide them with constructive feedback on how to improve the standard of their

work. One consequence of this is that higher and middle ability pupils do not have sufficiently high aspirations and do not make sufficient progress. Barriers to learning for pupils who have learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are carefully assessed. Their specific needs are met well in a variety of creative and effective ways.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory. A broad range of courses meets the needs of all pupils in Years 10 and 11 including those who have learning difficulties or who are at risk of exclusion. Vocational courses have been introduced which meet the needs of service industries in the local community. In accordance with the school's specialist Technology College status all pupils study aspects of technology in Years 7 to 11 and can take part in associated educational visits. Pupils have access to a wide range of enrichment activities. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' personal development, aspects of citizenship and work-related learning, but is not effective in developing their skills of literacy and numeracy. The sixth form curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. Students have a good choice of vocational courses which are suitable to their needs. Bridging courses enable those Year 11 pupils whose achievement is relatively low to progress into vocational education in the sixth form and subsequently move on to more advanced courses. In addition students can opt to follow more traditional advanced level courses.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance is good. Guidance for pupils is improving, particularly as year teams take a role in monitoring and reviewing their academic progress. Arrangements ensure the smooth transition of all pupils as they move between the stages of their education are well organised. Pastoral support is good. The school liaises well with outside agencies on all matters regarding the pupils' well-being. Teachers and other staff have a good understanding of the pupils' personal needs and so are able to respond positively as problems arise. Support is focused sharply on meeting individual need, particularly for those who have learning difficulties or are in public care. The school council has been instrumental in supporting the extension of the 'bully buddies' scheme, and pupils support each other constructively through various mentoring activities. Child protection and health and safety procedures are appropriate and understood by staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school's assessment of its strengths and weaknesses is broadly accurate. The evidence from this inspection supports the school's view that leadership and

management are satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form. The headteacher has been in post for just under a year and is leading the school well. She has a clear vision of how to raise the aspirations and achievement of the students and move the school forward. Senior managers and the headteacher work hard and have increased the pace at which improvements are being driven forward. Whilst this has been successful in improving behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching, managers acknowledge their actions have had insufficient impact on raising pupil achievement. The school has systems in place to analyse its performance and track and monitor pupil progress and makes data available to middle managers, teachers and pupils. New accountability systems have been put in place and line management formalised and strengthened. However, performance analysis has not focused on some key measures and although data is widely available it is not yet used consistently to identify areas which will bring about improvement. The headteacher and senior managers have achieved success in stabilising staffing through obtaining Training School status in 2003. However the previous high turnover of staff combined with recruitment difficulties, particularly in some subject areas, have increased the number of inexperienced staff which places additional pressures on managers. The quality of middle management is variable. The governing body is well organised and supportive of the school. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and are prepared to hold senior managers to account for their actions. Day to day financial management is good. The school currently has a deficit budget and is effectively working to reduce this. Some small academic courses in the sixth form are not cost effective.

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?	4	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
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?	4	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
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?	3	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	insufficient evidence

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

As you know your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of that inspection. I would like to thank you on behalf of the inspection team for being so helpful and welcoming when we came to inspect your school. Many of you were keen to tell us what you enjoy about the school, but you were also constructive about what you feel needs improving. Standards at the school are too low and many of you are not making the progress you should. Results at GCSE have been getting worse and are particularly low in English and science. Too many of you are not getting the qualifications and developing the skills you will need for the next stage of your education or for employment. This is because while much of the teaching at the school is good and getting better there is still some that needs improving. In those subjects where you have had several changes of teacher in a year it has been difficult to form good relationships with the teachers and this has resulted in you losing interest in the subject. But you have your part to play in this as well. You admitted that some of you do not work as hard as you could and particularly in the upper school think it is cool if you get low grades at GCSE. In some lessons some of you behave in a way that prevents other pupils in the class from learning. However, the news is not all bad. Test results at the end of year 9 have been good in mathematics and are getting better in English and science. Results in several GCSE subjects are good as are standards in vocational subjects in the sixth form. We agree with you that the school is a friendly place and could see that most of you have good relationships with the adults at the school. Many of you told us you are proud to be a pupil at Shoeburyness High School and you particularly enjoy practical subjects. Although you think you have a wider choice of healthier food than before you find it is expensive. A few pupils and parents reported concerns about the immature behaviour of a minority of you around the school and in lessons. The school has faced some difficult circumstances in recent years. It has not always been easy to recruit teachers particularly in English, mathematics and science. You are lucky to have Mrs Murphy as your headteacher because she is working very hard with other senior managers to improve this situation. They have introduced new systems so you, your teachers and your parents can be better informed about how well you are doing and whether you are achieving the very best you can. You will know by now that the school has been given a notice to improve. This means the school will be inspected again in one year's time and inspectors will expect to see that there has been significant improvement in: - the progress you make in English both by the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11 so you get better results in your tests and GCSEs - the progress you make in science by the end of Year 11 so you get better GCSE results - the results, in the tests at the end of Year 9, of those of you who have achieved the highest levels in English and science at primary school - your literacy and numeracy skills - the use of the information the school has about how well you are doing. You also need to be given more advice about how to achieve the highest grades in your work. This means Mrs Murphy and your science and English teachers in particular are going to be expecting you to work harder to get better test and examination results. Make sure you do not let them down.