



# Noadswood School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116415  
**LEA** Hampshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 279823  
**Inspection dates** 25 January 2006 to 26 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Alan Marsh HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	North Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Dibden Purlieu
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Southampton SO45 4ZF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02380840025
<b>Number on roll</b>	1143	<b>Fax number</b>	02380843532
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr G Bromley
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 February 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alex Bernard

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 25 January 2006 - 26 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279823
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## **Introduction**

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

## **Description of the school**

Noadswood is a slightly larger than average, over-subscribed, mixed comprehensive school on Southampton Waterside. One of three secondary schools in this locality. Almost all students are White British. Relatively few are entitled to free school meals. The number of students with special educational needs is above average. The school has a special unit for physically disabled students. The school has a full staff complement. A new headteacher took charge in September 2005.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Noadswood is a good school which helps most students fulfil their potential. It knows its own strengths and weaknesses well. Inspectors agree with almost all the judgements the school makes about itself, including its overall effectiveness. A new headteacher took over in September 2005 and under his leadership the school has a good capacity to improve. Over the last two years students' achievements and standards have improved considerably, especially at Key Stage 4, and most students now make good progress. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. School managers and governors have a clear vision for the school's development, a key feature of which is the achievement of specialist sports college status. This is being vigorously pursued. The school already has a new sense of pride and purpose, and is setting ambitious but realistic targets for further improvements. Teaching and learning are mostly good and some is outstanding. Teachers plan well and give stimulating lessons. They support and extend students learning according to their individual needs. All students, at whatever level of need, are very well cared for and guided watchfully through the school and beyond. However, a few students do not share the positive attitude and appetite to learn of the vast majority, and their behaviour spoils school life for some. Staff are now working hard to encourage all students to make a fuller commitment to their school community, and some ways of motivating students are already paying off. The school provides good value for money. Resources are satisfactory and in most cases they are used efficiently. The school has good facilities for sport but its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources are not used most effectively to enable students to learn independently. Students' social, imaginative and cultural developments are limited by a physical environment that is often cramped and uninspiring outside classrooms. Outdoor play and social spaces, some corridors and the dining hall do not currently serve students well. Middle managers lack opportunities to exercise leadership.

### What the school should do to improve further

\* Improve attitudes to learning by developing further the ethos of the school as a place where all students enjoy participating fully\* Increase the delegation of leadership to middle managers\* Develop further the use of ICT across the school in order to promote independent learning

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Students make good progress. They do so as a result of teaching that is often good or better, effective use of data to analyse performance, and challenging targets for students and subjects that are monitored and reviewed regularly. Students enter the school with above average standards and continue to progress well in Key Stage 3, particularly in English and mathematics. However, standards reached in science are currently lower than average and are below the school's target. Standards achieved

at the end of Key Stage 4 are above average. Examination results in 2005 improved upon the previous year's rise in the percentage of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at A\* - C. Girls' did very much better than boys in 2005, and lower ability girls made the best progress between Key Stages 2 and 4. Students did particularly well in mathematics, the sciences and German; results in French and ICT were noticeably weaker and were well below national averages. The school is already doing a lot to tackle underachievement where it has been identified at student and subject level. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. This is a result of the highly effective support they receive throughout their time in the school and many exceed the targets set for them.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development is satisfactory. Behaviour is usually good but a few defy the behaviour code. Some younger students have concerns about bullying, or fighting, but have confidence that staff or prefects will deal with it if informed. Students with learning difficulties or physical disabilities mix well with others. Consultations with students encourage their positive contributions to improving the school for everyone. The Excellent and Leading Students scheme effectively motivates many to make their best efforts, though a few aren't prepared to try. Students understand the system of rewards and sanctions and most respond well. The number of students excluded from school has fallen to an average level. Attendance is slightly above average and punctuality is good. Most eat and drink healthily in school and all exercise well in physical education lessons. Students feel safe, but smoking by a few remains a threat to both health and safety. High attendance and positive attitudes in lessons by the vast majority suggest most students enjoy school. Essential skills acquired in lessons by all students, including those who find learning difficult, combine well with extensive advice about further education and careers to prepare them well for their futures. Assemblies and tutorials prompt reflection about moral and spiritual matters but a few students lack imagination and so continue to be inconsiderate towards others. The cultural environment offers limited stimulation outside lessons, and the school does not yet do enough to prepare students for life in a multi-cultural society.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. The school knows this because it monitors them very well through thorough lesson observations. Some teaching is outstanding in the planning of the lesson's content, the range of activities used to inspire students and the teacher's focus on the needs of each student. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on the Black Death students responded very well to the pace and challenge of the teaching so that all, including those with learning difficulties, were able to produce vivid and well-structured writing. Teachers almost always use a variety of strategies and resources

so that students enjoy their lessons and achieve well. In Key Stage 3 the six-week units provide a consistent pattern of deciding and planning what and why students need to learn, how they might learn it, and how teachers will assess what has been learned. This system is coherent and effective. Occasionally, weak classroom management and unimaginative use of resources result in some students not making as much progress as they should. Teaching within examination classes is consistently good and teachers' strong subject knowledge is used well. Assessment and marking are strong in most subject areas and students are clear about what they need to do to improve. In some subjects, such as drama, individuals are encouraged to assess their own and others' work. This is beneficial. Students have some opportunities to develop teamwork and independent learning but these strategies are mostly employed for higher ability sets.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

At Key Stage 3 students enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum. The modular structure, and the teaching of students in groups that match their abilities and needs, offer flexibility and work well. At Key Stage 4 the school is developing a wide range of academic subjects and vocational courses, including some that are taught at a local college. Additional or early GCSEs and an AS course stretch more able students. There are many opportunities for students to extend their awareness of health and environmental issues and to develop work-related skills. The contributions of guest speakers, for example from the medical profession, are particularly valuable. Provision for ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection and all students now study it through both key stages. However, in many other subjects the integrated use of ICT to promote independent learning is restricted because there are insufficient resources and some teachers lack the necessary expertise. The range of extracurricular activities is good and students speak with particular enthusiasm about opportunities in music and sport; but the school is disappointed at the lack of student participation in some areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Students are well nurtured and their safety assured. The school is able to support children effectively because it knows and cares for them very well and makes excellent use of outside agencies when appropriate. Students with special educational needs and learning difficulties receive outstanding support which helps them develop well. The school is particularly watchful of the progress of vulnerable children. The unit for physically disabled students helps them integrate very well. There are very good systems in place for tracking students' progress and involving them directly in their academic and personal development. Communications to parents about these matters are frequent, offering good opportunities for collaborative work between home and school to help students develop. Most parents and carers are positive about the school and consider that it is now responding more rigorously to recent problems, but some are still concerned about the behaviour of some students.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher and restructured senior management team have made the school more effective and standards are rising. The school judges its own strengths and weaknesses accurately and is particularly astute in identifying priorities for development; however the self evaluation form lacks detail. The senior staff know their students well: they analyse and monitor their performance thoroughly and use this data expertly to spot trends and focus remedial attention. They are beginning to take more account of the views of students themselves and of their parents and carers in moving the school forward, Governors are very supportive and well-informed; they ask incisive questions of the school's managers but they also trust their professional judgement. They display a keen awareness and knowledge of the work and social context of the school. These qualities were foremost in the recent negotiations over the change of focus for the bid for specialist status. The leadership team make good use of outside agencies, including the careers service and local further education colleges, to support students' development. The school rightly identifies the need to improve the strategic liaison with the other local secondary and primary schools. Staff recruitment and development are well managed. However, in order to improve the sense of collective responsibility that the new headteacher seeks to promote some heads of years and subjects would benefit from being given more opportunities to exercise leadership. The least secure aspect of school management is the disaffected attitudes and behaviour of a few students. Leaders are beginning to find ways of involving more students in discussions about, and daily management of, how the school is run, so that everyone feels that they have an important contribution to make to the life of their school.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	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>	2	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	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	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**

We enjoyed visiting your school recently to inspect it. Thank you very much for making us feel welcome and for talking to us so honestly. We have now written our report and hope some of you will want to read it but this letter is addressed specifically to you and sums up what we think of Noadswood.

We think you go to a good school which has the potential to get even better. You do well in your national tests and examinations and make good progress. Teachers know and look after you very well: those of you with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do particularly well; and those of you who are academically more able are given work that really stretches you. Much of this can be put down to well-planned teaching which stimulates you; but most of you also deserve credit for your positive attitude - you enjoy coming to this school and want to learn. We think the 'Excellent and Leading Student' scheme has done a lot to motivate some of you in this way, and there is no reason why more of you couldn't become excellent students. A few of you don't let teachers help you develop as much as they could.

Some things can be improved at Noadswood: \* teachers need to make more use of computers across the whole school so that you can learn to work better on your own\* the senior staff need to complete the process of trying to get the school awarded specialist sports college status\* and most of all teachers need to involve you, the students, much more in the running of your own school community. You told us yourselves what needs to happen: some of you must behave better between lessons and at lunchtime; smoking in and around the school has got to stop; and you should all try and take part more in activities at lunchtime and after school. Mr. Bernard, as a new head, wants to know what you think will make Noadswood a better school. Tell him what you told us. Good luck with your studies,