



Hounslow School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116434
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279829
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005
Reporting inspector Alex Falconer HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Jacobs Gutter Lane
School category	Community		Totton
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Southampton, Hampshire SO40 9FT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380862981
Number on roll	1244	Fax number	02380663160
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Carol Bega
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2005	Headteacher	Ms Di Nightingale

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	Inspection number 279829
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two full time OFSTED inspectors and three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Hounslow is a large 11 - 16 secondary school near Southampton. Most of its pupils are of white British heritage. There is a very small number of pupils from Asian, Chinese and mixed race heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also very low. The school has specialist science college status and the head teacher has been in post for 7 years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

As a consequence of highly focused leadership and continuing improving standards and results Hounslow is an outstanding school. There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection. Self evaluation processes are very thorough and the school has a very good understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses.

Standards of pupils' achievements have improved both at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Teaching is consistently good and pupils take part in well planned lessons, although the most able pupils are not always challenged to achieve the highest standards in class. Pupils' progress is well monitored and assessment is good. The school has achieved specialist science status and broadened the range of courses available. Specialist GCSE courses in science are now available and the school effectively uses its science expertise in liaison and cooperation with local junior schools

The school is outstandingly led by the senior management team and middle managers. The capacity to improve continues to be very strong and the drive to improve standards is relentless. Managers are particularly effective in monitoring and analysing data which leads to a high standard of self evaluation. Close attention is paid to pupils' social, moral and spiritual development and this results in a caring atmosphere in the school. Expectations are high and the pupils respond by behaving in mature and responsible ways.

The school has very good links with local schools and with further education colleges and employers. Arrangements for work experience, community involvement and extra-curricular activities are good. Pupils take part with enthusiasm and demonstrate commendable commitment to healthy lifestyles. The governors support the school very well and are fully informed of developments and progress. The school provides excellent value for money. Inspectors found that significant changes to the accommodation along with new buildings have improved opportunities for young people. Resources are used very effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Ensure consistent progress for girls at Key Stage 3 in English.
- * Extend classroom provision for higher attainers who do not always make sufficient progress across the school and for those who would benefit from more vocational options.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school judges achievements and standards to be good and inspectors agree with this view.

Standards and achievement are good at Key Stage 3. Pupils come to the school with very positive attitudes to learning and broadly average attainments at Key Stage 2 of

the national curriculum. By the end of Year 9, pupils achieve standards well above the national average in Key Stage 3 National Curriculum tests. The best achievements are in mathematics and science. Overall pupils' progress at this stage of their education is good. However, in 2004 girls made less progress than boys and those with the lowest attainment on entry achieved only modest results.

At Key Stage 4 achievement is outstanding. Every Year 11 pupil is entered for GCSE and the proportion gaining 5 passes at any grade has been well above the national average for the past 5 years. The proportion of pupils who achieve five or more high GCSE passes has also been well above the national average for the past 5 years. For example in 2005, 77 percent of Year 11 pupils achieved five or more high grade GCSE passes meeting the target set by the school.

Progress in mathematics and English at Key Stage 4 was significantly above the national average in 2005. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in years 10 and 11.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy being in this school and are proud to belong to it. They show this in the enthusiastic way they talk about it and by their excellent attendance, punctuality and behaviour. They are a credit to the school and set the tone to incoming pupils, showing them by example what is expected.

Pupils' awareness of social, cultural and moral issues is very well developed through the citizenship and social education programme. Although the school does not meet the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship, assemblies make excellent contributions to pupils' personal development. Well organised tutorial lessons also make strong contributions to personal development and well-being. Pupils feel safe in the school and have very good relationships with adults and their peers.

Through well-established year and school councils pupils make an outstanding and valued contribution to decision making in the school. School council members are keen to join staff in furthering the school campaign for healthy lifestyles. The majority of pupils take regular exercise, for example in one of the many sports clubs or by cycling to school. Pupils' enthusiasm to initiate and become involved with community activities is outstanding. They are ready to suggest and manage money raising activities for charity, taking leading roles in school clubs and events and support for younger pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges teaching and learning to be good and inspectors agree. The quality of teaching across the school is consistently good and some outstanding lessons were observed.

The best lessons observed promoted a real enthusiasm for learning, which was skilfully built on by teachers. Pupils answer teachers' questions confidently. They make good progress in their studies and have the opportunity to discuss ideas in order to consolidate their learning. Interesting activities, such as Science Significance days, enable pupils to deepen their understanding and successfully make connections across subject boundaries. However, the most able pupils are not always given sufficient challenge.

Pupils and teachers get on well together and behaviour in lessons is calm. Pupils enjoy explaining and sharing ideas with each other.

Teachers' specialist knowledge is well used to plan activities that enable most pupils to learn effectively, although not all girls make the progress they should. Assessments of standards are thorough and accurate and pupils' individual performance is meticulously analysed. Individual targets are set throughout the school and the majority of teachers use them effectively to help pupils improve. Teachers are well aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and support them well. Their progress is regularly checked and the results used to raise pupils' awareness of their standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good curriculum with some outstanding features. Specialist science status has led to increased curriculum opportunities for pupils. Inspectors agree with the school that there is a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3. The range of subject choice has been increased for Year 10 and 11 pupils with entry level and specialist science courses on offer.

There are real strengths in the planning and evaluation of the curriculum and its links to staff development. The school is particularly proud of the flexibility of its approach and the way it consults pupils and their parents or carers. It is aware of the need to extend provision for the gifted and talented and for those who would benefit from more vocational options.

However, action taken is not yet rigorous enough

Close links with partner schools and colleges ensure continuity and progression into further education and employment. Careers education and guidance, work experience and business links are well developed. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities, such as participation in music and drama, competitive sport and community service.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for all its pupils and arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.

In the positive and calm ethos of the school, pupils feel safe in the knowledge that members of staff deal promptly with their concerns. Absence and lateness are followed up effectively and poor behaviour is dealt with promptly. Those most at risk are highly

valued and very well supported. The school works exceptionally well with carers and other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Year 7 pupils speak highly of the way the school has helped them to settle in. A strength of the school is the continuity of care for individuals from primary to secondary school. High quality advice and guidance supports pupils in planning the next stages of their lives. The range of options for GCSE is good and the school has useful and developing relationships with local schools, colleges and employers. Through their studies, the programme for personal development and well organised work experience, pupils are well prepared for adult life and for the workplace.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The head teacher and other members of the senior management team, very ably supported by heads of department and heads of year, provide outstanding leadership of a vibrant school. There have been year on year improvements in examination and test results, the school was awarded science specialist status and its reputation is high.

The school has improved in many ways since the previous inspection. The staff and governors demonstrate wholehearted commitment to high standards and the best care for pupils. A particular strength is the school's rigorous programme of analysis of data, monitoring and self-evaluation. Through the work of senior managers, including heads of department and heads of year, the school successfully promotes the drive to raise standards and achievement. The leadership is firmly focussed on developing pupils' personal and life skills as well as academic success, and pupils consequently hold the school in high regard. The leadership is dedicated to realising equality of opportunity, and whilst there are a few inconsistencies in the quality of classroom provision for higher attainers, who do not always make as much progress as they might, the leadership recognises this and is taking effective remedial action.

Governors fully share the vision for continued progress, and support the school admirably through training and links with subject areas. Their work is impressive. They provide a considered strategic overview and act as a highly effective 'critical friend' during review and evaluation. The school has very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school, and also excellent links with other providers such as local colleges. The school uses its resources and accommodation very effectively and provides excellent value for money. The provision for professional development and the ethos of collaboration and mutual support carefully fostered by the school have helped to overcome some staff recruitment problems. The school deserves its high local reputation.

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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?	1	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	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	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	NA

The quality of provision

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

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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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

Pupils

Following our visit to inspect your school on 28 and 29 September 2005, I write to tell you about our findings. Our main conclusion is that Hounslowdown is an excellent school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the part you played in the inspection. You attend a school that is calm and safe and you make good progress with your studies. Your behaviour at school is good and this contributes to a positive atmosphere with an emphasis on learning. Ms Nightingale and the managers of the school are outstanding and they lead the school outstandingly. A good deal of progress has been made since the last inspection in 1999. For instance the school accommodation has been improved and the school now specialises in science. As a result, there are more opportunities for you to study science courses in the upper school. We also found out that Science Significance days allow you to get involved in interesting activities and make valuable connections across subjects.

Teaching in lessons is good across the school and lessons are well planned. Your progress is well monitored and assessments are good. Year and subject heads are very good at monitoring your progress and analysing test and examination results. From this managers effectively evaluate developments in the school. Teachers provide a very high standard of care and support. Tutorial periods are well organised and assemblies are informative. Careers information and guidance is excellent and good arrangements are in place for you move on to further education or employment. In addition, very good collaboration with local junior schools helps Year 7 pupils to settle in quickly when they arrive.

Work experience, community and extra-curricular activities are very well organised. You have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of different activities. By cycling to school, playing sport and choosing healthy food in the canteen you are responding to the school's aim of encouraging you to adopt healthy lifestyles. The governors support the school very well and senior managers keep them well informed of your achievements and developments at the school. This school gives excellent value for money and the equipment and accommodation are used very well. We have asked the school to make the following improvements:- * Make sure that girls make consistent progress in English * Give the most able pupils more challenge to bring out the very best in them.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Falconer, Lead inspector/LMI

Her Majesty's Inspector