



Calthorpe Park School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116436
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279831
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006
Reporting inspector Alan Marsh

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Hitches Lane
School category	Community		Fleet
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		GU51 5JA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01252613483
Number on roll	998	Fax number	01252626091
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms R Willis
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Anwar

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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

Calthorpe Park School is an average-sized mixed 11 -16 comprehensive school in Fleet, Hampshire. Most of the 998 students are White British, whose first language is English. Relatively few are entitled to free school meals. The number of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. The school shares the excellent sports facilities of an adjacent community leisure centre. It was awarded specialist status as a maths and computing school in 2005. A new headteacher took over 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: 3

Calthorpe Park is a satisfactory and improving school with outstanding capacity to improve still further. The school is good in all respects except in the extent to which students make progress during their time in the school. Most do well by the end of Year 11 but, in view of their good standards of work when they join the school in Year 7, many should do even better. The new headteacher is very well aware that for the last few years good overall standards have masked the relatively slow progress made by some students, particularly between Years 7 and 9 and those of higher ability. She and her senior leadership team have carried out an astute analysis of which groups of students have, over time, been under-achieving and why, and they have already done a great deal to bring about improvements. Through skilful management, the talents of key members of staff have been fully realised and they in turn have ensured that many students have already made faster and further progress this year. On the strength of this cumulative evidence, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve. A lot of teaching is good, some is outstanding, and the best practices are being successfully disseminated to all.

The school has a long-standing tradition of encouraging students to understand and participate in the world at large. For example, a group of Year 10 students recently won an opportunity to attend the G8 summit conference of world leaders, and the Model United Nations work is exemplary. These practices continue to flourish and students have a strong voice in their school, particularly through the dynamic school council which is increasingly influential in shaping the character of the school. Most students seem happy and all feel safe. They thrive in an inclusive environment in which their contribution both to their own and to the wider community is vigorous and highly esteemed. A few students are reluctant to learn or play a full part in the life of the school, and their lack of engagement occasionally undermines the work of the vast majority. The school now provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

andmiddot; enable students to make better progress through their five years in the school, particularly between Years 7 and 9

andmiddot; raise the quality of all teaching to the level of the best

andmiddot; develop in all students the appetite for learning displayed by most

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards reached by students are good but the progress they make whilst they are at the school is only satisfactory. In particular, the progress made by boys is below average. In mathematics and particularly in English students make less progress than they should. When they enter the school at age 11 the standard of students' work is above the national average. Their attainment in GCSE examinations at age 16 is also

above average. Standards are particularly high in biology, chemistry, French, German, history and music. However, the gap between the school's results and national test results at the end of Years 9 and 11 has narrowed over the last four years. Students' progress in English, mathematics and science between Years 7 and 9 has been relatively slow for the past three years. In GCSE examinations students did not do as well in English, information and communication technology, home economics or social studies as in their other subjects.

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of the very effective support they receive.

The school recognizes that some students, including those with higher ability, have not been reaching their full potential. The actions it has taken to try and ensure that they do are already having a positive impact. Assessments of current work indicate that students are now making faster progress than they were last year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Most thoroughly enjoy school, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. A few students, however, are casual about education and their curiosity and initiative remain dormant. This adversely affects the atmosphere in which others learn. Attendance is average but levels of unauthorised absence are high; this is, in part, due to some parents taking their children out of school for holidays during term time. Students participate enthusiastically in many extra-curricular activities: music and sport are prominent, and an excellent business enterprise project develops teamwork and communication skills. Students generally feel safe and they know who to turn to for help. They value their peer mentors; older students support younger ones well. Students respond well to the good programme that encourages them to live healthily. A great strength of the school is the effective promotion of young people's moral, social, and cultural development. An inclusive culture prevails. Students commented excitedly on the 'massive opportunities' the school gives them to build links with other people and organisations, both regionally and nationally. Students take on responsibility by acting as Model United Nations ambassadors, meeting with politicians and serving on the increasingly effective and influential school council. They organise raising funds for many charities and are involved in a wide range of community events. They develop a good range of skills to equip them for future employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall; however, this standard is not yet securely consistent. Relationships between teachers and students are mostly very good, although those few students who are reluctant to learn are also reluctant to build respectful

relationships with teachers. Many lessons are now good and some are outstanding. Teachers increasingly use assessment skilfully to stimulate and support learning, create imaginative opportunities for collaborative working and make excellent use of interactive whiteboards. As a result, students are focused and engaged and so are making faster progress than hitherto. Their desire to explore knowledge and ideas is aroused and many develop a good capacity to learn independently. They are keen to do well. In an outstanding science lesson, students were engrossed both by the teacher's dynamic use of role play to illuminate the operation of immune systems and by their own further exploratory questioning. In a French lesson, the teacher modelled the use of a writing frame before students completed their own and then, using projected transparencies, shared them with each other in an effective critical review.

In a few lessons, students are not always clear about what they are learning or why, and they are given imprecise feedback on their work. Consequently, a few students become indifferent to what is being taught, lacking motivation and application; and some more able students do not make as much progress as they might. The setting of homework is inconsistent. There is some very good practice in the marking of students' work: in geography, for example, precise subject-specific guidance is provided and students are aware of exactly what they need to do to become better geographers. In some other subjects, however, marking does not always help students sufficiently to understand how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum. At the end of Year 9 students are offered a wide choice, including subjects such as photography, sociology and music technology. A programme of support and enrichment offers additional help to students who need it and encourages some to take up a new subject that interests them. Students identified as having high academic potential are encouraged to opt for Challenge, a course designed to encourage problem-solving and leadership. Some students who are more practically inclined can study subjects such as motor vehicle engineering, and spend part of their time on vocational placements. Work-related learning, enterprise and citizenship are embedded within the effective Personal and Citizenship Education (PACE) programme. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably since the last inspection and students are now better able to apply their ICT skills across different subjects. Some teachers do not use ICT as much as they might. The school provides a rich variety of extra-curricular activities: music, sports, political advocacy and business enterprise are prominent and lead to regular success by students in competitions. The vast majority of students continue in further education when they leave the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school maintains a caring and supportive environment which successfully fosters an inclusive culture. Policies and procedures to safeguard students and ensure a safe

working environment are effective. The school's partnerships with outside agencies provide excellent care and support for vulnerable students and for those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Parents and carers of these students trust teachers and praise the school's work. The school's guidance on subject choices and careers is good and helps students make informed decisions about their futures. Very good links with the community and partner institutions make for smooth transitions for students at each stage of their education. Students appreciate the care and support they receive. The systems for monitoring and guiding students' personal development and welfare are good; those for guiding their academic progress are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are now having a significant impact on students' achievements because staff are strongly motivated. The new headteacher and senior leadership team are moving the school forward with passion and determination. They share a strong sense of purpose and set clear priorities. A genuinely consultative culture prevails in which the views of staff, students and parents count. Students enjoy a powerful democratic voice. Many experienced teachers are re-invigorated and their teaching has found new energy and invention. Middle managers are enthusiastic and resourceful.

The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and insightful. It shows a clear capacity to use the intelligence gathered from assessments to ensure that students make better progress than hitherto. A wide-ranging number of strategies are now being successfully followed in pursuit of higher achievements for particular groups, and especially of better progress between Years 7 and 9. School leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of their teachers very well and are fully committed to raising the standard of all teaching towards the level of the best. A professional learning programme in which the best teachers coach their colleagues is having a significant impact. Subject reviews focus acutely on students' achievement and the results of lesson observations, and are excellent tools to shape improvement. Staff development has a high priority and is very well planned and managed. The school is well supported by knowledgeable governors who enjoy frequent and open communications with the school's leaders. They now use data very effectively to monitor students' progress and to hold the school's leaders to account for bringing about improvements. Many initiatives are already having a significant impact on students' progress as demonstrated by year group assessments.

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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?	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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

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?	2	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?	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	3	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

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

Children

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

Almost everything about your school is good except for the progress many of you make between the time you join the school in Year 7 and the time you leave at the end of Year 11. You do well at GCSE but the school needs to help you reach your potential more quickly in Years 7, 8 and 9. Your teachers know this and are already working hard to help you do even better. Obviously, they need you to work hard with them too! They are good teachers. They look after you well and help you develop personally and socially. You also deserve a lot of credit for the excellent ways in which you contribute to the life of the school and to the wider world beyond. We were particularly impressed with some of what you showed and told us: the Model United Nations, business enterprise projects, your dynamic school council, exciting music and sports activities. A few of you don't seem to want to learn or get involved in what's going on; this is a shame because your teachers really do want to include all of you and, as one of you told us, there are 'massive opportunities' at this school. We also think it's a pity that some of you occasionally miss school to go on holiday during term time. Your parents should try and avoid doing this as far as possible.

We have a lot of confidence in your new headteacher, Mrs Anwar, to run the school very well and to make sure you all make better progress from now on. To do this she needs to have the full commitment of all of you and your parents. Calthorpe Park has outstanding potential to improve. Help make it happen.

Good luck with your work,

Alan Marsh

Her Majesty's Inspector