



Dyson Perrins CofE High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116995
LEA Worcestershire
Inspection number 279972
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Cartwright HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Yates Hay Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Malvern
Age range of pupils	11 to 19		Worcestershire WR14 1WD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01684 564751
Number on roll	970	Fax number	01684 573765
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sue Evans
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr David Griffin

Age group 11 to 19	Inspection dates 1 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	Inspection number 279972
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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

Dyson Perrins is an average-sized mixed comprehensive school with a small sixth form, one of two secondary schools serving Malvern. There is low student mobility and a favourable socio-economic profile reflected in below average numbers of students entitled to free school meals. Very few students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A relatively high proportion (4%) of students have statements of special educational needs because of the provision of a special unit for students with autism and other needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Dyson Perrins High School provides a satisfactory education for its learners. Students enjoy their time at school and generally make the progress expected, although the school recognises that for some boys in Years 10 and 11, this could be better. The pleasant and cheerful attitudes and good behaviour of students reflects their good moral, social and cultural development. The school cares well for each student, and there is good support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). Students spoke highly of their good working relationships with teachers.

Teaching is satisfactory with many good elements, particularly in those lessons that maximise opportunities for students to have some responsibility for their own learning, with challenging tasks well matched to individual student capabilities. Generally, students know their anticipated examination grade targets, but these are not yet challenging enough to meet fully all students' potential. The marking and assessment of students' work does not always set high enough expectations for students, or show them how to improve. There has been relatively little opportunity for students to follow vocational pathways in Years 10 and 11 or in the sixth form, reflecting a curriculum that has only recently begun to address a broader provision for meeting the needs of all learners. A relatively new headteacher and chair of governors have established good working relationships with existing managers and brought about improvements in the monitoring of teaching and learning. The school has accurately evaluated its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and has made reasonable improvement since the previous inspection. Most issues raised have been satisfactorily resolved, with new leadership now explicitly addressing spiritual development. Accommodation has improved, and it is a pleasant place to learn. The school is well placed to improve further. It delivers satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory, which concurs with the school's own evaluation. Students in the sixth form take an effective part in organising house activities, for example, the charities committee set a clear example to the rest of the school in fundraising for good causes. In lessons, students enjoy dialogue that demonstrates their willingness to think independently. They make satisfactory progress. However, the predominantly academic curriculum provides too few opportunities for vocational pathways and, as a result, fewer than half of Year 11 currently progress to the school's sixth form.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of assessment of pupils' work to ensure consistent marking and planning practice by all staff, higher staff expectations of what all learners could achieve and better involvement of learners in knowing what they should do to improve.

• Continue the planned developments of the curriculum to better match learners needs, particularly those of boys in Years 10 and 11 and vocational opportunities for all.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school accurately judges its learners' achievement to be satisfactory. Students have broadly average attainment standards on entry to the school, and leave with standards which are also broadly average.

Standards at the end of Year 9 have risen in recent years, and are now just above average. Progress measures suggest that in Year 9 national tests the vast majority of students are achieving as expected, with progress in English better than in other subjects in 2005. GCSE results in 2004 were significantly below average and represented inadequate progress for the students concerned. GCSE results recovered in 2005 to match the national average, and represented satisfactory achievement overall in comparison with similar students in similar schools. Boys, however, did less well than girls even after the national differences between boys and girls are taken into account. Students with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. Those students with learning difficulties who are attached to the school's specialist unit for autism make good progress to attain higher standards than might be expected because of the well targeted care and support they receive in an environment in which they can flourish.

The achievement of students in the sixth form is satisfactory. Sixth form standards have been broadly in line with the national average for A level courses since the previous inspection. A particularly high set of results in 2004 was followed by lower than average results in 2005, but these were consistent with the academic standards of students on entry to the courses.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Their moral, social and cultural development is good because of this caring ethos. Cultural awareness is widened through trips abroad and through celebration in dance and other activities. Visiting speakers and other external agencies make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Students' spiritual development is satisfactory, but the daily tutorial session is only partially effective in respect of meeting the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

The behaviour and attitudes of students are good, especially where teaching is exciting and stimulating. Attendance is in line with national average. The school is working hard to improve attendance with good deployment of support staff to work with students and their families. Most students say that they enjoy school. They have an effective voice on the school council and have been instrumental in making the school a better place. In this safe and caring environment, students are confident that any rare case of bullying is dealt with swiftly and efficiently.

Although the school has promoted healthy lifestyles through changing what is offered in the canteen, students have yet to embrace healthier eating patterns. Students do, however, get good opportunities for physical fitness development. Students make a satisfactory contribution to the community, with some getting involved in musical, fundraising and religious events. Extra-curricular activities are popular and provide good opportunities for working in teams and participating in residential trips.

Students are given adequate opportunities to build key skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT). They also have satisfactory work experience and work related learning which contribute satisfactorily to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good; students were appropriately challenged in contexts that engaged their enthusiasm, with good questioning of individuals encouraging them to think. In some cases, though, lessons are dominated by teachers' explanations, with too few chances for students to take part; in others, the teacher's input does not inspire much interest. Most lessons are well paced, but in a substantial minority the rate of learning is slow, with too little time for reinforcement at the end of the session. Teachers work well with teaching assistants to promote the learning of students with learning difficulties or learning disabilities.

Some teachers have successfully adopted assessment practices that give students clear feedback related to achievement of their targets and involve them in evaluating their own performance. This is not consistently carried out so that students do not understand how to improve in all subjects. Teachers mostly plan effectively to meet objectives that are clear to the students and that build on their prior learning, but weaknesses in use of assessment in some subjects mean that these objectives are sometimes not challenging enough.

Teaching is satisfactory in the sixth form. In the best lessons, knowledgeable teachers engage the students with lively discussion of challenging issues. They use probing questions to encourage students to think for themselves. In some classes, students need clearer guidance and more support from their teachers when they do not understand the content of the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum in the 11-16 school covers legal requirements, although there is inconsistency in the quality of coverage of citizenship and ICT through other subjects. Afternoon tutorial time is not consistently well spent. The school recognises that the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is more suitable at present for students whose

preference is for academic subjects. A very few who find the normal school day difficult are provided for by a link course with the local college. The options offered to the present Year 9 are now addressing the needs of the full range of students. There is a good range of enrichment activities with high level of participation in music, drama, dance, sport and ICT. Links with the local community are satisfactory, and enable students to raise funds for local charities and participate in work experience in a wide range of local companies. Students are involved in school productions and enterprise activities. The school provides a satisfactory range of curricular and extra-curricular visits.

The sixth form curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good range of A level options, although there are only a few opportunities to follow vocational courses. As a result, a relatively low proportion of Year 11 students enter the sixth form, with others preferring to follow more appropriate courses available in local colleges. However, almost all who enter A level courses remain at school into Year 13. The enrichment programme for the sixth form is satisfactory with students organising inter-house sports and other events, and a strong charities committee raising funds for a wide range of local and other causes. Students help regularly at a local lunch club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided for learners is satisfactory throughout the school. Students and staff have good relationships. Procedures to identify students who are at risk or in need of additional support are effective. The Able Autism base and Learning Resource Centre make good provision for students with particular learning difficulties and disabilities. The teachers and teaching assistants in the units work together productively. Records show that most pupils in these units make good progress, socially and academically. The Learning Support Unit plays a positive role in supporting students who are temporarily finding learning challenging. The work of the teaching assistants is coordinated effectively and they are starting to have a positive impact on the planning and delivery of differentiated provision in the lessons they support. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection. The school works effectively with external agencies to ensure that students with learning difficulties and disabilities and looked after children receive appropriate academic and personal support, so that they can succeed.

Students receive sufficient good quality information, advice and guidance in order for them to make informed course and career choices. A whole-school approach towards using assessment to improve students' learning is being developed. The impact of this is only just starting to be seen. Learners' have an understanding of their final grade targets. Some lessons cater for a range of learning styles and focus well on what students need to do to improve, but this is not consistent practice. Where teaching is good assessment information is used to inform lesson planning. Individuals' needs are met through learning activities that develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to make progress. Weaker teaching takes less account of students' prior attainment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The recently appointed headteacher has quickly and accurately evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses and had equally quickly established constructive working relationships with the previous leadership team. As a result, there has been a clear focus on better monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning that complements an existing system for monitoring and developing the performance of staff.

Parents and students contribute to the school's evaluation of its performance on a systematic basis using an independent survey. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire showed good support for the work of the school. The school has analysed examination performance well, and recognised areas for improvement. For example it has begun to tackle key issues relating to curriculum provision in order to address the relatively weak progress of some boys. The previous tradition of school improvement planning had not involved departments fully, with a tendency to focus on resources and provision rather than taking a critical look at the necessary educational strategies needed to improve achievement. The recent focus on using assessment to improve learning is a welcome and clear priority in this respect.

Most issues raised by the previous inspection have been resolved satisfactorily, although progress in offering more opportunities for pupils' spiritual development has been limited. Accommodation has improved significantly, although work remains in some older areas of the school. The school has successfully added a new block, and attract a shared sports centre on site. The site is well managed, and appreciated by students.

A relatively new chair of governors has a good understanding of the school, and the governing body undertakes a satisfactory range of monitoring activities. Governors operate their own self-evaluation to check on completion of tasks. Financial management is sound overall, although a recent shortfall in student numbers has constrained the school's ability to meet all of its plans.

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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	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	3
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?	3	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
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?	3	3

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	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	Yes

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

Dyson Perrins Church of England High School Yates Hay Road Malvern Worcestershire WR14 1WD

2 March 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for your welcome and helpful conversations during our visit to inspect your school. We took your views seriously, and appreciated your honesty, enthusiasm and commitment.

We think your school is giving you a sound education, and you can expect to make reasonable academic progress during your time here. In particular, you are developing a good understanding of moral, social and cultural issues and also behave well. This is mainly thanks to a good working atmosphere and sense of mutual respect between you and your teachers. The school really does care well for you, and is trying hard to ensure you make the best of your time. Your sense of enjoyment, and of positive attitudes to learning, was evident with all students that we met. We agree with you that the school is a pleasant place to learn.

The school knows it should provide a wider range of courses for older students, and has already begun to improve the options for Year 10 in 2006. It is working towards a broader sixth form curriculum that should improve the number of vocational pathways for sixth-formers in the future. In many subjects, teachers already mark your work with comments and clear advice, but this is not yet consistent enough. You have end-of-course grade targets, and recently there have been regular progress checks to help inform you and your parents in time to make adjustments to your learning before the end of the course. You should expect to know how well you are doing and what you should do to further improve, in all your subjects.

Best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Brian Cartwright Her Majesty's Inspector