



Malet Lambert School Language College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118069
LEA Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number 280231
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Jane Austin

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	James Reckitt Avenue
School category	Community		Hull
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		HU8 0JD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01482 374211
Number on roll	1403	Fax number	01482 707642
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr I Bexley
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs S Ireland

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 280231
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of four additional inspectors led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Malet Lambert School Language College is a larger than average comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years. There are 1,403 students on roll, almost all of whom are of white British heritage. Six pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below the national figure. Malet Lambert School is a specialist language college. It has the Investors in People award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Malet Lambert School Language College provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. This matches the school's own view of its effectiveness. By the end of Year 11, pupils reach average standards. They make satisfactory progress overall, but boys do not make sufficient progress in Years 10 and 11. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although some lessons are exciting, some are mundane and lead to indifferent attitudes to learning in a minority of pupils. They frequently distract others in class. More able pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable because the work they are given is not demanding enough. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory: it has been improved since the last inspection by the introduction of more opportunities for work related learning. The school's language college status enhances the opportunities for pupils to experience other countries and cultures. Pupils are cared for well and helped to stay safe. However, tracking is not sufficiently rigorous to identify rapidly the underachievement of some groups of pupils and establish how learning can be improved.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff know the school's strengths and areas for development: they need to address the latter at a faster pace. Governors hold the school to account very effectively. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and has the capacity to make the improvements identified as necessary by this inspection. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards for all pupils, and especially for more able pupils and boys in Years 10 and 11 by:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning
- improving the attitudes and behaviour of all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The attainment of the annual intakes of pupils to Year 7 is broadly average; all pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 and reach average overall standards in Year 9. The results of the Key Stage 3 national tests are average overall. In 2004, the results were above average in English, average in mathematics and below in science. In 2005, the results were lower in English but rose in science. They met the school's statutory targets in each subject and boys and girls achieve equally. The pupils tend to be better at reading than writing and the weaknesses in their writing are a barrier to their progress throughout the school. This was also found to be the case at the time of the previous inspection. The school has begun to tackle the weakness in pupils' writing and the work of the newly appointed literacy coordinator is clearly having a beneficial effect. The better results in science are due,

at least in part, to a vigorous focus on improving pupils' written work in the subject as well as a greater emphasis on practical work. The proportions of pupils who achieve higher levels in the tests at the end of Year 9 are not high enough.

Pupils continue to make satisfactory overall progress in Years 10 and 11 and general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) results are generally average. However, the school's results have not risen as fast as results have nationally and the proportions of pupils who achieve the higher A* and A grades in GCSE, are not high enough. The overall results also disguise considerable underachievement of the boys in this key stage. In 2004, 66% of the girls achieved five or more passes at grades A* to C, whereas only 39% of the boys did so. In 2005, the results were higher than those of the previous year but boys' underachievement was still a feature. The more successful subjects at GCSE are English, English literature and history. Comparison with national averages indicates that the least successful subjects are science, French, German and Spanish. The comparison is justified in the case of science but the comparison of the modern languages results should be treated cautiously because, as a language college, this school enters many more pupils for examinations in modern languages than most other schools.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils say they are proud of their school. They know that adults listen to them and that they have a voice through the school council. They enjoy the many opportunities for extra-curricular activities. One boy said, 'everything is there for you if you want to learn'. Pupils also appreciate the extra dimension that being a language college has added to their education. They say that it has widened their horizons and given them more opportunities in the local and wider community.

After consultation with governors, parents and pupils the school has recently developed a new behaviour policy. This is having a positive impact on the minority of pupils who do not behave well and have negative attitudes to learning. Teachers are developing a more consistent approach in dealing with incidents of misbehaviour and bullying. The school hopes that the current high level of temporary exclusions will reduce as this policy continues to take effect. A minority of parents expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour and, although behaviour is satisfactory overall, inspectors found these comments to be justified. The school is working to improve attendance, which is in line with the national average. A problem is caused by many pupils taking holidays during school term time.

Pupils develop social skills and awareness of other cultures well. They have a sense of right and wrong. Their spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils listen to the school's advice about healthy lifestyles and were directly involved in asking for more healthy options in the canteen. They are well informed about opportunities for further study and the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school accurately assesses the quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory overall. There are efficient procedures in place for regularly checking on this and, as a consequence, the school has identified aspects of teaching and learning which require improvement. A coherent programme of suitable training has been provided to address these and the positive impact of this advice was evident in some of the lessons visited by inspectors.

In the good lessons, teachers' thorough subject knowledge leads to well planned activities that build learning effectively. Brisk introductory tasks focus the pupils' attention on the topic and time targets help to maintain a lively pace throughout lessons. Interesting tasks, that require the application of a broad range of skills, engage the pupils effectively. Work is tailored to meet the needs of pupils: those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported effectively in class by teaching assistants. Good relationships set a positive climate for the development of cooperative skills through team and paired work. For instance, Year 11 pupils worked together enthusiastically and successfully as they set up their young enterprise businesses. Lessons end well with a rapid assessment of learning by both the pupils and the teachers. Sometimes good use is made of interactive whiteboards to present this evaluation in engaging ways.

In lessons which are satisfactory, activities are often dull and do not challenge the pupils' thinking rigorously enough. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, lose interest and are distracted from their learning. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Insufficient attention is paid to developing the pupils' skills in written work and this hinders their progress. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. They do not always know how to improve their work and marking does not give them sufficient guidance. Homework fails to build on learning effectively because tasks are not of sufficient quality or set regularly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Its breadth and structure has improved since the last inspection with the introduction of three pathways at Key Stage 4, broadly matched to the pupils' abilities. The addition of a range of vocational courses is meeting the needs of lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11. However, the school does not meet statutory requirements regarding the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 10 and 11.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe. There are opportunities in lessons for work related activities, developing an understanding of citizenship and improving literacy, but monitoring is not consistent enough to measure progress. Regular reviews of what is taught and how pupils are grouped take place, but some lessons seen indicate that more careful monitoring is required to ensure groupings work effectively. Language College status has had an impact on the curriculum and community classes are offered in several languages. Exchanges and visits extend the international and economic experience of some pupils. The many activities outside the school day offer a broad range of sporting, recreational and cultural experiences to pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care for all its pupils. There are some very good features. Arrangements for the transition of pupils from their primary schools are impressive. Proper attention is paid to health and safety matters and risk assessments, both of which are regularly evaluated. Child protection procedures are fully understood by staff, all of whom receive training. The Haven is an effective school facility established to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils who are vulnerable or in need of special care. Pupils are encouraged to examine their problems and helped to find solutions so that they can gradually return to mainstream lessons.

Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school and all can turn to an adult in confidence if they need help or advice. Most pupils know how well they are doing but the school is not doing enough to track pupils' progress so that underachievement can be identified early and steps taken to improve results. Care for pupils with learning difficulties is good and teaching assistants work hard to support them. There are good links with many outside agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be done to move the school forward. She has correctly identified weaknesses in teaching and learning as the barrier to raising standards. However, a greater urgency is needed to implement change. Standards have not improved much from the time of the previous inspection and pupils' achievement remains satisfactory.

The senior leadership team has recently been reconstituted and enlarged and its members provide effective support to the headteacher. Their strengths complement each other and they work effectively as a team. Teachers said how much they appreciated their visible and supportive presence around the school, both at break and lunch times, and during lessons. Clear areas of responsibility and accountability now exist and lines of communication have improved as a result. Middle managers are capable and enthusiastic. Heads of subjects know that standards could be higher. They

are keen to improve results and are willing to look at new ways of improving their effectiveness.

Governance is good. Governors know and support the school well. They know which areas of the school are strong and where improvement is needed. They are not afraid to ask awkward questions. When concerns about pupils' behaviour were raised, they responded quickly and effectively, with questionnaires to teachers, pupils and parents. They are aware that results have been static in recent years and are determined to see an improvement. Financial management is sound and resources are effectively deployed.

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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	3	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	3	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?	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	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

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The School Council

Malet Lambert School Language College

James Reckitt Avenue

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3 November 2005

Dear Pupils,

We enjoyed visiting your school and were interested to hear your views and to see you at work in different subjects. We are writing to let you know that we think your school provides a satisfactory education.

Staff work hard to care well for you and help you to work in a safe and healthy environment. Your behaviour is usually satisfactory. The standards you reach are average. Improving your writing skills would help you do better. We found that boys in Years 10 and 11, and the most able of you, do not do as well as you could. Sometimes this is because small numbers of you don't pay attention in lessons and distract others. This makes it difficult for everyone to learn as much as they should.

Many of you told us you are proud of your school and that your ideas for improving it are taken seriously. You obviously enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sporting, recreational and cultural experiences, including visits and exchanges. The benefits of being a language college have given you more possibilities.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you reach higher standards by making all lessons as interesting as the best we saw. Many of you need to be given more difficult work. You can help by working as hard as possible to reach the targets your teachers have set for you. If you all behaved well in lessons, everyone would learn more.

Thank you for making us feel welcome in the school. We wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Austin

Her Majesty's Inspector

On behalf of the inspection team

Annex B