



The Harvey Grammar School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118805
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280396
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Selwyn Ward AI

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

Type of school	Grammar (selective)	School address	Cheriton Road
School category	Community		Folkestone
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Kent CT19 5JY
Gender of pupils	Boys	Telephone number	01303 252131
Number on roll	946	Fax number	01303 220721
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Trevor Greening
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Keith Rivers

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	3 May 2006 - 4 May 2006	280396

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its students from among the top 25% of boys in the local authority's 11-plus examinations. This means that, although students' attainment on entry is well above average, it is not as high as in many of the other selective schools in the country. Most students are from White British families, although several minority ethnic groups are represented in small numbers. There are very few students for whom English is an additional language. Students come from generally advantaged social and economic backgrounds and relatively few have learning needs or disabilities. The school has had specialist status for sports with mathematics since September 2005. In the sixth form, the school operates in partnership with Folkestone School for Girls, so that more than 40 boys join courses run at the girls' school and a similar number of girls attend courses at this school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with many good features. It provides sound value for money. Students are eager to learn and benefit from a curriculum that is well matched to their abilities. Standards are high but the many very able students do not do as well as they should at GCSE because they are not set challenging enough work and behaviour management is not as good as it could be in lessons. Marking and the targets set for students do not always give them enough practical guidance on what they need to do better.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although the school judges its overall effectiveness to be good, and therefore more positive than that of inspectors, it has accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of some key aspects of its work, including teaching and learning and the progress which pupils make. Teaching and learning and the progress that students make are satisfactory for the school as a whole and very good in the sixth form. The school has successfully tackled most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report and has demonstrated that it has the capacity for continued improvement. However, many of the key changes introduced in the school, including the move to specialist status in sports with mathematics, are too recent to have yet had a significant effect.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form is good, and this matches the school's own evaluation. Students benefit from individual monitoring, advice about future career paths, and a wide curriculum which meets their needs very effectively. They make very good progress and A-level results continue to rise each year. This is the result of very good teaching. Students' attitudes are very good and they are helped to develop into mature young men. They enjoy the responsibilities available to them and are good role models for younger students. A very high percentage of students stay on to the sixth form and almost all complete their courses. The sixth form benefits from dynamic and good leadership with a clear vision for the future and the energy to sustain and build on its current success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that students are set challenging enough work, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- Raise teachers' expectations of good behaviour in lessons.
- Ensure that students are given clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Standards are high but achievement is satisfactory overall because, in the words of a parent, "the school does not add the value it should with very bright pupils". All boys meet and almost all exceed the standards expected for pupils at the end of Year 9. Even taking account of the boys' well-above-average starting point, this represents good progress from Years 7 to 9. Progress is not as good in Years 10 and 11. At GCSE, students do particularly well in history, business studies, media studies, design and technology and physical education. They do notably less well in modern foreign languages, geography and music. Although the school meets its 100% targets for GCSE passes, not enough of the most able boys are attaining A* and A grades in these examinations. This shortcoming is remedied in the sixth form, where students make very good progress and more than half achieve GCE passes at grades A and B.

Nevertheless, the low proportion of A and A* grades at GCSE is significant because it can limit students' higher education options. The small number of students with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and they achieve well as a result.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Sixth formers' attitudes are very good and they are helped to develop into mature young men. Students enjoy coming to school, as shown by the high levels of attendance, although some are tardy getting to lessons. They are generally eager to learn, but in several classes, where students are not set challenging enough work, there is a pervasive level of chatter that can adversely affect the learning of others. Students are well aware of this problem and complain about it themselves. Almost all students show that they are capable of acting sensibly and safely. This is apparent in many lessons and generally in the grounds, the corridors and the Harvey Diner, where the atmosphere is calm and orderly. Students learn to adopt healthy lifestyles. For example, the school has been successful in attracting students to its diner where a very good range of healthy food and drink is now on offer. There are two hours of physical education or sport a week and large numbers engage in further sports activities in their own time.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older students are encouraged to support younger ones through mentoring, tutoring and buddy systems. In the sixth form, students benefit from opportunities to help in primary schools and many take part in community activities. The recently re-established school council is beginning to give students a say in the running of the school. In addition, students are gaining useful skills that will contribute significantly to their future economic well-being, including Young Enterprise and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. In the sixth form, they show that they understand how best to relate to and show respect for staff and each other. Students are helped to widen their horizons and learn about other cultures, including through opportunities to join overseas expeditions.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is very good in the sixth form. The most effective lessons, including most of those in the sixth form, are well planned with varied activities that help to keep students interested and involved. In these lessons, time is used well so that the students get a lot done. Too often, however, the most able students are not pushed hard enough to gain the highest grades, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Too many lessons lack pace. In these lessons, too long is allowed for activities that are sometimes unchallenging, especially for the most able. This can sometimes result in students getting bored and restless, leading to off-task chatter and low-level disruption. Some teachers do not reinforce basic orderly routines in class to ensure that all students behave as well as they should and show respect for each other. This results in much calling out of answers and announcements of "I've finished" at the end of a piece of work. Marking is inconsistent. In some subjects, it gives students insufficient guidance on what they need to do to do better. Good practice was seen in GCSE revision work, however, where examination board assessments were used to ensure that students understood what was expected of them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it is well matched to the needs and abilities of the students, including the small number with learning difficulties and disabilities. In Years 7 to 9, students have been given more opportunities to learn modern foreign languages, with dance and drama also now added to the curriculum. The range of options in Years 10 and 11 has been adapted to meet the needs of the students with the introduction of the applied science, BTEC at National and First Level in sports studies, and business courses. In the sixth form, students benefit from options closely tailored to their needs through the very effective partnership with the local girls' grammar school, which offers alternative combinations of subjects and some additional subjects, such as travel and tourism. Although the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably since the last inspection, staffing difficulties have restricted its discrete delivery to just Year 7 and examination groups in Years 10 and 11. Otherwise ICT is only taught through other subjects, which limits its impact. This deficiency is being addressed with the appointment of an additional teacher for the next academic year. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sport that are well supported by the students and contribute to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles, and which befits the school's specialist sports college status. Other enrichment activities are comprehensive, with a wide variety of clubs and activities that contribute well to students' personal development. The range of extra-curricular opportunities in music, however, is too limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support given to students are good and contribute significantly to their personal development. Students and parents appreciate this as a strength of the school. Child protection and first aid arrangements are effective. The school makes sure that all students join in with activities wherever possible and supports those with specific physical or emotional difficulties. With an increase since the last inspection in the number of students with emotional difficulties, the school has appointed learning mentors to provide additional support and guidance. The very small number of students learning English other than as their mother tongue benefit from additional language support. All students have ready access to personal help and advice, not only from adults, but also from sixth form students specifically trained in this role. Systems for keeping track of students' academic progress are more effective in some subjects than in others, and there is much inconsistency in the quality and quantity of marking. Although students are clear about their expected grades, they are not always as clear about what they should most concentrate on to do better. The quality of advice and guidance given about options in Years 10 and 11, sixth form and in further and higher education is good. The extensive range of work experience open to boys in Year 10 provides a valued and valuable insight into the wider world of work. Careers guidance is followed by detailed discussions with staff about choices available after taking GCSE. These are positive, encouraging and realistic. There is, however, insufficient careers guidance for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership has been accurate in its evaluation of the strengths of the school and of those specific areas that need to be improved, although not quite as accurate in its judgment of the school's overall effectiveness. From its evaluation, the school has recognised that, although pupils attain high standards, some are capable of doing even better and are not reaching their full potential. To overcome this the school has implemented a rigorous system for monitoring teaching that provides a useful starting point for improvement, although shortcomings identified have not always been followed up in subsequent observations. With the exception of music, over which there have been some staffing difficulties, the leadership and management have been successful in tackling the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. Productive consultations with parents have led to improvements in communications on the setting of homework, and discussions with students have led to additional workspace being created in the sixth form. The school has this year introduced a number of further initiatives to raise standards, including the formation of a teaching and learning group to monitor teaching and learning styles, but these, and the school's specialist status, have not yet had a chance to have a significant impact. Leadership and management of the sixth form is

good. It has successfully created an ethos where students respond very well to the opportunities on offer to them and achieve very well as a result.

The governing body is supportive of the school but several governors are quite new and this has limited scope for them to question and challenge the school. The introduction of link governors for each subject is leading to better communication between governors and staff.

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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	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
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	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	2
The behaviour of learners	3	2
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
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

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school

You are keen to learn and most of you enjoy school.

Academic standards are high, and those of you in the sixth form do particularly well.

The school offers a good range of subject choices that are matched well to your abilities and needs.

You benefit from good opportunities to take on responsibility.

The leadership and management of the school have a good understanding of what needs to be done to make your school even better.

These are the things that we think could be better

More of you should be getting A and A* grades at GCSE.

Sometimes you are not set challenging enough work in lessons.

Some teachers are too tolerant of those of you who chat in class when you should be working.

Marking could give you clearer guidance on what you need to do to do better.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.