



# Hutton Church of England Grammar School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119794  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280662  
**Inspection dates** 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Jim Bennetts

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Liverpool Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Hutton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19		Preston, Lancashire PR4 5SN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys	<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 613112
<b>Number on roll</b>	804	<b>Fax number</b>	01772 617645
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Mike Webster
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Pearson

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 19	<b>Inspection dates</b> 8 March 2006 - 9 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280662
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Hutton Church of England Grammar School is a comprehensive school for boys aged 11 to 16, with a sixth form for boys and girls. There are 626 boys in the main school and 178 students in the sixth form, of whom about a third joined the school at age 16. The school largely serves an affluent area to the south of Preston. Pupils joining the school have the range of ability found nationally, but on average, they have reached standards that are well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about a third of the national figure. About 90% of pupils are of white British background.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors and the school agree that this is now a good and improving school. Pupils make better than usual progress in the main school; the 2005 GCSE results were an improvement on the previous year. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they are avid learners. New management initiatives have harnessed the commitment and goodwill of the staff to strengthen quality control and thereby raise standards.

Whilst in many respects, the school has long-standing strengths, the checks and balances that most schools have put in place to ensure the best possible teaching and to identify underachievement amongst pupils have been lacking. The curriculum has not been sufficiently responsive to recent vocational developments. Moreover, the school has not always made the most of links with its partner schools and colleges. New management has made a start in putting things on a better footing. These developments have the support of staff, pupils, and the school's wider stakeholders. However some developments would benefit from further refinement.

The good progress that is achieved on a modest budget indicates good value for money. Though quality has been uneven at times since the last inspection, there has been rapid and effective recent improvement. The school's recent developments augur well for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The school and inspectors consider the sixth form to be good. About two thirds of the sixth form is drawn from the main school. Others join from local schools and sometimes from further afield: there are a few students whose earlier education was overseas. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form and generally welcome the academic curriculum and traditional ethos. They are positive about the teaching and support that they receive. They are well looked after by pastoral staff and students speak particularly highly of the support and encouragement they receive from the head of sixth form. The curriculum is being expanded cautiously and so far as funding will allow. There are good enrichment activities. Students generally know their A level target grades and they are kept informed of their current standard and effort; the school is taking steps to improve tracking and evaluation arrangements. Progress in the sixth form is at least satisfactory; typically progress in subjects is similar to that found across the country but because students take more courses than usual, overall points are in the top quarter of the national range. The limited number of lessons observed showed some satisfactory and some good teaching. The better sessions involved scope for independent initiative and collaborative discussion; in weaker lessons such opportunities were sometimes missed.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Strengthen and refine systems for assessment, marking pupils' work and tracking pupils' progress.

- Develop the monitoring of teaching further as a means of raising the quality of all lessons to the standard of the best.
- Embed planned curriculum developments effectively.
- Cultivate stronger links with parents, partner schools and colleges.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school and inspectors agree that achievement and standards are good. Pupils joining the school have a wide range of standards in national tests at age 11, but the average standard is well above the national average. They make consistently strong headway in mathematics during the years leading to tests at age 14; performance in science and English has recently improved and is indicative of satisfactory progress. The overall progress from national tests at age 11 to GCSE examinations is better than that found nationally. About 80% of pupils have achieved at least five higher grade GCSEs over the last few years, and all but about 4% achieve at least five lower grades. The results for 2005 were better than those in 2004. There is particularly effective progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science; results are very high in religious education (RE). The 2005 results showed the most impressive progress for the more able boys. Realistic targets are set and results in 2005 came close to the targets; targets are lower for 2006 and this is appropriate in relation to the points from which that year group started.

In lessons and books seen during the inspection, progress was generally good; pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, were making equally good progress. In the sixth form, students start with a range of attainment that compares favourably with that in sixth forms nationally; results in A level subjects are similar to those normally found, but because students take more courses than usual, overall points achieved are high.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school and inspectors agree that pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is very good indeed. Pupils enjoy school, and this is reflected in their excellent attendance, which is well above national levels. Relationships are very good; pupils get on well with each other and with staff. They say they feel safe and know how to deal with incidents of conflict. They are confident that such issues will be tackled swiftly and seriously. Pupils understand that the school has high expectations of them and very few fail to live up to these. Their strong sense of pride in the school is illustrated by their vigorous support for the successful sporting teams, most notably this year in rugby. When given the opportunity pupils take responsibility readily, for example, through the house system and in the recently introduced school council.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Moral and social dimensions are especially strong, but multicultural provision is less developed. Pupils are prepared well for life after leaving school. The well planned PSHE programme

promotes skills in citizenship and personal relationships, dealing effectively with issues relating to sex, drugs and careers. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles through its very strong commitment to sport and exercise, and the good range of extra curricular and house activities: participation rates are high. The school is seeking a healthy school award, and further improvements to school meals are planned. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well and, consequently, pupils are well placed for adult working life. They become increasingly mature and confident young people as they move through the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school that teaching and learning are good overall. Two thirds of lessons seen were good or better. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it well to plan effective lessons. They organise lessons well and manage pupils' learning through logical sequences of activities, which support their progress. Lessons are increasingly being planned around learning objectives, but the quality of these objectives in teachers' planning varies too much and they are often concerned more with the activities for pupils than learning outcomes. Lessons are managed well and pupils generally enjoy them. They find the work challenging, but not too difficult, and feel that their teachers support them well. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and they respond with good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour. Teachers make good use of questions to extend pupils' thinking and use a range of suitably challenging activities, materials and resources. In Year 11 the appetite of prospective students for advanced study is sometimes whetted by outstanding teaching, for example in the top mathematics set.

Teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to meet the needs of different pupils in classes. There is limited use of peer assessment and assessment criteria in lessons, although National Curriculum level descriptors are displayed in some rooms. The quality of marking varies too much. Pupils are told where they have made mistakes, but are not guided sufficiently on how to improve. Work in some pupils' books is left unmarked for long periods. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn independently, and more lessons need to be planned to provide this. Teachers make insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT).

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school and inspectors agree that the curriculum is satisfactory. It offers a broad and balanced experience for most learners which enables a large majority to achieve well. Academic courses respond effectively to the career aspirations of the majority and this is a major reason for parents, pupils and sixth form students choosing the school. In addition to English, mathematics and science, all 15 and 16 year old pupils

follow a course in RE and ICT. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for. The option system for Years 10 and 11 is developing to provide more vocational opportunities, with provision out of school for construction and catering. The school is considering the introduction of engineering. It is in early negotiations with another school about possible collaborative developments. These curricular innovations reflect local needs and are equipping students with good work related skills. The sixth form offers an expanding range of advanced level courses.

Community links are strengthening; local collaboration underpins the 'community plan' in the school's bid for specialist school status for mathematics and computing, which will be submitted later this year. Many students participate in a wide range of extra curricular activities, particularly in sport and increasingly in the arts. The combined PSHE, careers and citizenship programme contributes well to pupils' awareness of their responsibilities in society. The school provides effective opportunities for collective worship, though not on a daily basis.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school evaluates its care, guidance and support as good; inspectors judge them to be satisfactory. There is a high level of concern for, and commitment to, pupils' welfare. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds feel they have a trusted adult to whom they can turn if they have a problem. Procedures for child protection are not yet securely established because, although it was planned, staff training has not taken place. All necessary health and safety requirements are firmly established and effective. Systems for risk assessment, including those for trips and visits, are thorough. Pupils say they feel safe and appreciate the steps the school takes to deal with concerns such as bullying. Effective partnerships with outside agencies help to provide good care and support for pupils with learning difficulties. Improving links with feeder primary schools ensure that pupils settle smoothly into Year 7. Pupils are given appropriate guidance when choosing options and when making career and post-16 decisions, including opportunities available in both the school's sixth form and the local colleges. Effective links with parents are maintained through regular reports and well attended progress evenings. Parents are very satisfied with school and its efforts; despite recent improvements some feel the school could do more to seek and act upon their views, and those of their children. Academic guidance requires strengthening. The school has recently introduced systems for tracking pupils' progress in Year 10. In Years 7 to 9, pupils' efforts and attitudes to work are carefully monitored; the school acknowledges that further work is needed to develop consistent systems that will use available data to set challenging targets for pupils and check on their academic progress more rigorously.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Inspectors and the school consider that leadership and management have become good. The headteacher has been in post for nearly a year. He has been well supported by governors, the senior leadership team and other staff in introducing a reflective and consultative style of management alongside robust quality control systems. The school has many established strengths, particularly in the commitment of its staff and the keenness of its pupils to learn. Necessary procedures to check on progress in main school and the sixth form are now being implemented successfully. There is growing enthusiasm amongst teachers to engage in self-review of lesson quality and departmental effectiveness. Links with partner schools and further education are being strengthened. There is scope for reinforcement of these management initiatives.

The school is at present in the midst of a major rebuilding programme which has already brought long needed improvement to the facilities of some departments. Yet this development inevitably brings significant day to day disruption. All this has been well managed. Though the school has passed through a period of financial stringency due to a budget deficit, financial control by governors and senior staff has been astute and the school now has a sound break-even budget. The school is wisely investing in improvement of its ICT facilities.

The school takes on board the views of parents and pupils, though a significant minority of parents wonder whether due attention has been given to their views in the past. The governors, head and senior staff have a very good grasp of how things stand. They are shrewdly cautious in innovation and are carrying the school community with them in implementing improvements that need to be put in hand. The school has very good capacity to improve further.



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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
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	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	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	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
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	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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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March 2006

Dear students

Inspection of Hutton Grammar School

We enjoyed our visit to Hutton Grammar School and we are grateful to you for all the help you gave us when we came into lessons, talked with you in discussion groups and met you around the school.

We think this is a good school.

The school has long standing strengths which everyone connected with the school values highly. You work hard, play hard and enjoy school life. Staff are highly committed to their teaching and all the sporting and other activities that they make possible. Most of you have done well before joining the school at age 11 or 16; you generally make good progress and results at GCSE and A level are high. On the whole, teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. In many ways you are well looked after by the school. Though the courses available for older students reflect the school's continuing traditional approach, there are helpful new developments. Governors, the headteacher and senior staff have been working hard to develop systems to make sure that things are always as good as possible. The school is well run.

To make the school even better we have asked the school to focus on the following points.

- As you know, there are a lot of helpful comments from teachers when they mark your work, and teachers use various systems to let you know how well you are doing and what your targets are. We think all this could be made even more effective.
- Some teachers look at one another's lessons and then talk about their impressions. This is helpful in getting lessons better. We think there should be more of it.
- Some new courses have been introduced recently and there are plans for more. The school will consolidate all this.
- In order to support you as well as possible, the school has links with the primary schools that you come from, secondary schools that might share new courses, and FE colleges that might help with new courses and to which some of you go after GCSE. We think the school could make more of these links.

And there is just one final thing for you. We found you always self confident, polite and helpful; you made a very good impression. You generally look smart. But what about those shirt tails?

You are fortunate in being at such a good school. We wish you all well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Jim Bennetts

Her Majesty's Inspector