



Alderman White School and Language College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122851
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281360
Inspection dates 15 February 2006 to 16 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Bob Roberts LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Chilwell Lane
School category	Community		NG9 3DU
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9170424
Number on roll	683	Fax number	0115 9170494
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Ann Duffin
Date of previous inspection	27 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs. Janice Addison

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 15 February 2006 - 16 February 2006	Inspection number 281360
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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

Alderman White School and Language College is a mixed 11-18 comprehensive school. With 683 pupils on its roll it is smaller than average size. It is situated on the south west side of Nottingham, on the edge of its catchment area, Broxtowe. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and with additional learning difficulties are above average. Almost 89% of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Pupils in the sixth form attend the Lakeview Centre, which is situated at another nearby school as part of a joint sixth form arrangement. Alderman White is a specialist language school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing satisfactory education overall. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory, particularly with respect to the curriculum provided in the main school (11-16). The school has recently been through a turbulent period, marked by significant problems with staffing. This affected pupils last year (2004-05). Although their examination results indicated they had made reasonable progress, their behaviour and attendance were unsatisfactory. This period is now behind the school. Behaviour and attendance have improved and are satisfactory. The very recent progress is recognised in the local community. The parent questionnaire used as part of the inspection generated a very positive response. The care and guidance provided for pupils both in the school and the sixth form are good. The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets national requirements, with the exception of religious education in the sixth form, and opportunities to study modern languages have been enhanced. It is, however, a narrow curriculum and does not meet the learning needs of all pupils very well. The quality of teaching is currently unsatisfactory overall, although it is improving and effective steps are being taken to bring it to a satisfactory standard. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is setting high standards and has put in place very good systems to monitor and improve the work of the school. Becoming a specialist language school has developed the school's role in the community well. The school's self evaluation was accurate. Although the school needs to be clear about the future direction of its sixth form, it does have the capacity to improve. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The school grades the overall effectiveness of its sixth form as satisfactory and inspectors agree with this. The sixth form is a shared provision between Alderman White and a nearby partner school. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the quality of provision are not clear. Although relatively few students from Alderman White gained higher grade passes, the progress made in 2005 relative to their starting points was satisfactory. There is distinct underachievement in a small number of subjects, a situation which the school is addressing. The personal development of students is satisfactory overall. They show a positive approach to learning. Students speak highly of the personal commitment and support of their teachers. The quality of care and guidance they receive is good, whether they are going on to further study or to places of work. The curriculum in the joint sixth form is narrow, and meets the needs of only a minority of Alderman White pupils. The school is due to review its sixth form provision in the light of national strategies for 14-19 education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning to at least satisfactory levels by ensuring that all teachers incorporate features seen in the best taught lessons.
- Raise pupils' standards of achievement by rigorously implementing the recently

established systems for monitoring and review. - Broaden the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 in order to better meet the learning needs of all pupils. - Clarify and pursue a clear vision and strategy for post-16 provision.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory, both in the main school and the sixth form. Pupils, including those with additional learning needs, make satisfactory progress in all parts of the school. Pupils' starting points in Year 7 are close to the national average. In the Year 9 National Curriculum tests in 2003 and 2004 the standards they reached were below the national average. However, in 2005 these test results improved to around average overall, and confirm the school's and inspectors' judgement that pupils make satisfactory progress in these years. Standards improved significantly in English and science, to above national expectation. This was not the case in mathematics, where fewer than average pupils reached the expected national standard. Progress is satisfactory overall in Years 10 and 11, although improvement in standards has not been as marked as in Years 7-9. Results in the GCSE examinations have fluctuated considerably in recent years. In 2005, more pupils gained five or more pass grades A*-G than is typical nationally. However, the number of pupils who gained five grades A*-C fell below the national average and was short of the school's own targets. The school has put in place more rigorous systems to monitor pupils' progress towards their individual examination targets. Those targets set as a result of being a specialist language school have mostly been met and standards in foreign language subjects have improved. Pupils enter the sixth form with below average standards of attainment compared to pupils beginning advanced courses nationally. The standards they reached in advanced level examinations in 2004 were well below the national average, but improved in 2005. Pupils continue to underachieve in some subjects, but make satisfactory progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development in the main school and sixth form is satisfactory. Pupils and students show secure moral and social development. Spiritual development is unsatisfactory but pupils' cultural awareness is good. This positive feature partly reflects the additional links with different cultures prompted by the school's language college status. Pupils also show good awareness of the art, music and religions of many different cultures. Behaviour and attendance were clearly unsatisfactory during the last school year, but there have been very marked improvements so far this year and they are both now satisfactory. Exclusions had been far too high but show a dramatic, sustainable, reduction this year. Pupils' attitudes, levels of maturity and confidence still vary considerably but it is those with a responsible and positive outlook who are now dictating the ethos of the school. A growing number of pupils of all ages contribute to school and community life and this aspect of their development is satisfactory. There are pupils representing the school on the local youth forum; pupils publish their

own weekly newspaper and others have given up time to paint and decorate parts of the school. A satisfactory number are involved in clubs and activities meeting after school and in lunch times. While pupils know a lot about healthy eating and life styles they have yet to adopt these widely and this element of their development is unsatisfactory. They have made better progress in acquiring the skills required to succeed in the work-place. This reflects the provision of work experience, special events and regular work-related features within the curriculum, especially the Education for Life programme.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The school has recently gone through a difficult time with its staffing and in its own judgement the quality of teaching is not at present satisfactory. However, the school's view is that the overall quality has improved considerably over the last year, is close to being satisfactory, and that the measures in place to improve it further are working. Inspectors support this judgement. The school has this issue, rightly, as its top priority. Rigorous systems are in place, which both support and challenge teachers to improve, and there was clear evidence in the inspection that this is happening. Some good teaching was seen. This was marked by very good relations between teachers and pupils, and a sense of enjoyment and fun pervading the classroom. There were interesting activities, pupils moved briskly from one task to another and were positively involved in what was going on. By contrast, inspectors also saw some poor teaching. This was largely with pupils in years 10 and 11. In these lessons, teachers were not able to engage the pupils and there was low level disruption that was not being controlled and was impeding the learning. Almost all pupils had their planners with them in the lessons, but the homework entries evident in them were variable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, in both the main school and the sixth form. In keeping with the school's specialist status, there is a wider range of languages available than might be expected. This has positive advantages for pupils' future economic wellbeing and their cultural development. Pupils benefit from the school's growing international links, which extend to work experience. In Years 7 to 11 the curriculum meets National Curriculum and statutory requirements. The Education for Life programme is well-constructed to cover personal, social, and health education but also incorporates citizenship and work-related learning. Pupils clearly enjoy the opportunities for participation that this programme offers. Although it is satisfactory, the curriculum does not meet the needs of all learners well. During Year 10, pupils take part in work experience, but progress towards introducing vocational opportunities in the curriculum for all pupils has been slow. A broader range of courses is planned for the next academic year. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils who are gifted or talented, and

for those with special educational needs. A reasonable range of extracurricular activities is available. Although relatively few pupils in the main school take advantage of these, more do so in the sixth form. Whilst satisfactory overall, the sixth form curriculum is almost entirely made up of traditional, advanced level, courses, with few vocational options. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are not fully met, an issue from the previous inspection which remains unresolved. As it stands, the curriculum meets the needs of relatively few pupils at the school, and large numbers pursue post-16 education at other establishments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils, in the main school and in the sixth form. Good systems are in place to ensure pupils' safety. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are sound. Staff show very strong commitment to the welfare of pupils and know their needs well. Pupils trust the adults at the school. The school has rearranged its leadership structure to give greater prominence to care and guidance issues. Good links exist with parents and other agencies. The school has recently established a very well run inclusion centre to help vulnerable pupils cope more effectively with factors affecting their behaviour, attendance or progress. This has already had a marked impact on the number of exclusions. While there is scope for improvement, much of the support given to pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to succeed in lessons. Arrangements for the movement of pupils between schools or key stages are satisfactory. Careers advice is effective in enabling pupils to make choices which match their abilities and interests. There are very effective systems for setting targets with pupils and monitoring their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has established very clear priorities for the main school and has set high standards. The priorities are well judged and widely understood, partly through the very good school improvement plan. The headteacher has shown courage and determination in tackling some difficult issues. Wide ranging and rigorous systems for monitoring and reviewing different aspects of the school's work have been put in place. These are having an impact on behaviour and attendance as well as the quality of teaching. The headteacher has a clear view that managers at all levels should lead as well as manage in their area of work. A policy to coach and improve these skills is being determinedly pursued. At present, however, leadership at these levels varies in quality. The project to develop as a specialist language school has been well led and managed. There is a clear commitment to equal opportunities within the school. The new Inclusion Centre is an example of this commitment to caring for all pupils. At present, however, the school's curriculum does not provide equally well for the needs of all pupils. Finances are well-managed. There are good links between plans and budgets and the school provides

satisfactory value for money. The governors of the school provide efficient, committed support. There is a good range of expertise on the governing body and they provide a satisfactory level of scrutiny. Governors were involved in drawing up the school's self evaluation. The school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses was analytical and accurate. However, whilst the vision and direction for the main school is clear, there is a great deal of uncertainty and lack of clear direction concerning sixth form provision.

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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?	2	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

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	3	3
The behaviour of learners	3	2
The attendance of learners	3	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	4	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	4
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?	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	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	2	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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	No
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

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. First of all, however, I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your courtesy and co-operation during our visit. You were a credit to the school. The inspection found a good deal that the school can be pleased about. The majority of the pupils are happy to come to school, and your parents clearly think well of the school. There is a friendly, positive atmosphere. Pupils are making generally satisfactory progress. Last year it is clear that the behaviour and attendance of pupils was not satisfactory, but they have both improved this year. The examination results are satisfactory and in some respects the school is doing particularly well. The number of pupils finishing Year 11 with more than five GCSE passes is above national averages. The fact that the school is a specialist Language College is benefiting pupils in a number of ways. The school is doing its best to care for all pupils and the new Inclusion Centre is evidence of this. There are some aspects of the school's work that need to get better. Your achievement needs to be better still. Our view is that the quality of teaching in the school is improving quickly but still needs to be better. You yourselves can make an important contribution here, by thinking about what you are learning and being attentive and constructive in the classroom. We also think that, although the curriculum in the school is satisfactory, it needs to develop, so that more pupils find their work interesting and meeting their needs in the main school and sixth form. We are confident that your headteacher is setting the school in the right direction and that it will continue to improve. You all have a responsibility to help. We wish you well for the future.