



Alleyne's High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124417
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281719
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006
Reporting inspector David Anstead HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Oulton Road
School category	Community		Stone
Age range of pupils	13 to 18		Staffordshire ST15 8DT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01785 354200
Number on roll	1020	Fax number	01785 813278
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Lockley
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Spears

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
13 to 18	1 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	281719

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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

Alleyne's High School is of average size but with a relatively large sixth form. This is the third year of its specialist technology status. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well below the national average as is the proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has been awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark and is a recognised Investor in People. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds (or heritages) is much lower than the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory and that the effectiveness of the sixth form is good. The curriculum is well planned. It is varied, flexible and meets the needs of the vast majority of students well. The staff of the school are committed to its caring ethos. Students feel safe and are well looked after. The support provided by the Access Unit and the Learning Support Team are particular strengths. Teaching is generally good although, in some lessons, teachers talk too much and do not use methods that actively involve students. Students do not enjoy such lessons. This leads to chatter which not all teachers manage well. In some subjects students need more precise guidance on how to improve. Consequently, achievement and standards are only satisfactory overall although they could be higher in Key Stage 4. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school is now tackling underperformance in a few subjects with greater urgency. Its specialist status has enabled the school to introduce new courses at GCSE and in the sixth form as well as aiding the improvement of accommodation and resources. Issues from the last inspection have mostly been dealt with and the school has the capacity to continue to improve. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The school's evaluation is that the sixth form's effectiveness and efficiency are good. Inspectors agree. Standards are above average by the end of Year 13. Progress is good because most teaching is good and students display positive attitudes to their work. The sixth form is led well. Teaching and tutorial staff work effectively to monitor progress and support individuals. Personal development is good and students benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences. The sixth form is highly regarded within the local area and popular. Over half of the school's Year 11 students join each year as well as some students from other schools. Staying on rates on individual courses are very high in both Years 12 and 13. A very high proportion of students go on to university and further education. There are good links with outside organisations including local universities. There is a strong sense of community with students working well together, for example in raising funds for charity. The sixth form provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve achievement at Key Stage 4 by: • making lessons more interesting, involving students more actively in their learning and matching work more closely to individual students' capabilities; and • extending the excellent practice in assessment and guidance on how to improve, seen for example in religious education, to all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Improve achievement at Key Stage 4 by: • making lessons more interesting, involving students more actively in their learning and matching work more closely to individual students' capabilities; and • extending the excellent practice in assessment and guidance on how to improve, seen for example in religious education, to all subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well being are good. Students respond well to the school's good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a positive attitude to their learning in most subjects. Attendance levels are good because the school works hard to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Personal development is good in the sixth form and students benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences. Students have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities. A number of parents and pupils expressed concerns about behaviour but behaviour during the inspection was good in lessons and during the informal break times. Students open doors for visitors and make them feel welcome. Relationships are strong and this contributes to personal development. There are a few instances of bullying but these are dealt with swiftly and pupils feel that there is always someone they can confide in. Students have a good awareness of issues affecting their personal safety and adopt healthy lifestyles. The school council meets regularly and has helped to bring about improvements to the school uniform and to the canteen. There are strong links with the local community and students learn to make a positive contribution through fund raising, visits and events such as the Christmas concert for the elderly. Students enjoy lessons where they are actively involved in their learning. A significant number of students enjoy and benefit from the wide range of clubs, visits and activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. There are good opportunities for students to experience work placements and they make sound progress developing skills for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the sixth form. Many lessons are good, a few are outstanding, and only a very small proportion inadequate. The rigorous monitoring of teaching and the judicious sharing of expertise in order to spread best practice are reducing the amount of weaker teaching. The best lessons include a variety of activities which interest and motivate pupils, involving them actively

in learning. Good relationships, appropriately challenging work, probing questioning and brisk pace combine to ensure that students learn well and make good progress. Teachers insist on good behaviour, thus creating a purposeful working atmosphere. In these lessons, students behave well and contribute significantly to their own learning. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support from their teachers and assistants and, as a result, they achieve well. Where teaching is weaker, the teachers tolerate immature attitudes and chatter for too long and so learning and progress are interrupted. In some lessons, the tasks set do not take sufficient account of the wide range of students' capabilities. In others, teachers talk too much, and do not involve students actively enough. The quality of marking is variable. Excellent practice, for example in religious education, shows students clearly how to improve further. Sometimes, however, teachers' comments are not specific enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school offers students a wider range of subject choices in Year 9 than is usually seen. There is a good variety of GCSE subjects and, suitable alternative courses for lower-attaining students, which include study at a local college and a youth club. For its most able students in Years 10 and 11, the school offers AS philosophy as an alternative to one GCSE course. In the sixth form there is a good range of vocational courses as well as traditional academic subjects. The specialist status has enabled the school to introduce GCSE engineering and accounting, and applied science in the sixth form. Students have satisfactory opportunities to develop work related skills. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of clubs, sporting and musical activities, and a variety of local and overseas residential trips. These provide good opportunities for students to extend their personal and academic development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. All staff are strongly committed to the care and support of their students. The good relationships between adults and students help students to feel safe and secure and to enjoy school. All assessments for child protection, health, safety and other risks are rigorous and are reviewed regularly. Students benefit from the excellent counselling support they receive in the Access Unit and the Learning Support Unit and from Connexions. Students in care are well supported and make good progress. The school promotes awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle through opportunities for regular activity, healthy options in the canteen and regular access to drinking water. The 'drop in' sessions with the school nurses are well attended and provide students with opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have. The support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. All students receive helpful guidance and advice when deciding on courses and on their future career. Students in the sixth form are well supported in progressing to university or further education. There are effective links with support agencies, parents and carers and this contributes to the quality of the support.. There

are very good procedures to monitor students' progress but there is room for improvement in the way information is used to ensure all pupils reach their full potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Most issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The school has recognised underachievement in the past two years and is now taking robust action to address it. The school has the capacity to continue to improve. Self-evaluation is strong and includes good mechanisms for seeking the views of parents and students. It is thoughtful and analytical. The school knows itself well and it reviews its effectiveness thoroughly at all levels of leadership and management. There is a shared vision that achievement needs to be raised and that the quality of teaching and learning could be better. Professional development and the sharing of good practice are supported and encouraged. There is now a strong culture of accountability with resolute action taken to deal with weaknesses in teaching and learning and in management. The school successfully pursues initiatives to benefit pupils. Its achievement of specialist school status has aided the improvement of accommodation and resources. It has further improved the accommodation through a variety of successful funding bids. It has worked constructively with its partner schools to ensure continuity and to raise achievement. Leadership team roles have been reshaped to reflect key priorities, including higher achievement. Team members are effective in their individual roles and in supporting each other. Strong links between senior and middle managers assist the consistent and regular review of agreed targets and progress in reaching them. The sixth form is well led. Governors are conscientious in fulfilling their statutory roles. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but have not adequately monitored the results of actions to improve performance.

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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?	2	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	3	2
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	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
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	
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	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	2	
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

3 March 2006 Dear Students, Following our visit to inspect your school, I am writing to tell you about our findings. I would like to thank you for your friendly and honest responses to our questions. We found this helpful in deciding what is good about your school and what needs to be improved. We think the education you receive at your school is satisfactory and it is good in the sixth form. . These are the strengths of your school: • The choice of subjects available to you is good. • The range of clubs and after school activities is good. • The school looks after you well and you told us that you feel safe. • Relationships are good and many of you told us that you enjoy your social life at school. • Teaching is fine in the majority of your lessons. There are some aspects of the school's work which we think can be better. In some lessons teachers talk for too long or ask you to write for the entire time. You told us that you were bored in these lessons and that some of you then start to misbehave. We have asked your headteacher to help all teachers prepare interesting lessons for you. We have also asked that you receive better guidance on what you need to do to improve to achieve your minimum target grades. You can help by always making a good effort in lessons and by acting on the advice you are given on how to improve. I wish you every continued success in the future. David Anstead HMI Lead Inspector. Alexandra House 33 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE T 0207 421 6800 F 0207 421 6707 www.ofsted.gov.uk