



Howard of Effingham School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125247
LEA Surrey LEA
Inspection number 281922
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006
Reporting inspector Alex Falconer HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Lower Road
School category	Community		Effingham
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Leatherhead KT24 5JR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01372453694
Number on roll	1534	Fax number	01372456952
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr C Williamson
Date of previous inspection	15 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs R J Barnfield

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	1 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	281922

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The Howard of Effingham School is a large 11 - 18 comprehensive. The vast majority of the learners are of white British heritage; the remainder are of Asian and mixed race heritage. The proportion of learners eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The number of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also low. The school has specialist science college status and the head teacher has been in post for 7 years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Howard of Effingham School is outstanding and has improved in a number of ways since the last inspection in 2000. The school has been awarded science specialist status, provision for learners with specific identified learning needs has been improved and some vocational courses have been added to the curriculum. The school judges the overall effectiveness of the school to be outstanding. In addition managers judge that the school provides excellent value for money and demonstrates an outstanding capacity to improve. The school self-evaluation documents are very clear and analytical and inspectors agree with these judgements. Achievements and standards are outstanding in Key Stage 3 and by the end of Year 9 learners achieve test results well above the national average. Pass rates at the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) are high. In 2005 77% of learners entered for GCSE achieved 5 or more A* - C grades. In the sixth form students achieve excellent General Certificate of Education at Advanced level results and the majority go on to higher education. Teaching and learning across the school are good and outstanding in the sixth form. Lessons are varied and challenging so that learners are fully stretched. They enjoy being at school and have excellent attitudes to work. Their behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around the school. Learners also have very good understanding of health issues. Care, guidance and support provided for learners are outstanding. Mentoring provided for individual learners from teachers and other learners is outstanding. Leadership and management are outstanding. The head teacher provides first class leadership dedicated to raising standards. Management information, such as the impact of some school policies and the progress of learners with specific identified learning needs is, however, not always analysed at a strategic level. Governors, managers and teachers work hard and successfully run an excellent school with a high reputation.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The sixth form is outstanding. Skilled teaching and students' enthusiasm for study result in high standards. Retention rates on all courses are very good. Personal skills are effectively nurtured through excellent contributions to the life of the school and charity work. Students make outstanding progress through a wide range of academic subjects and around 80% go on to higher education each year.

What the school should do to improve further

Establish a clearer strategic overview of performance in the following areas: * The progress of learners with SEN * The quality of teaching and learning * The impact of school policies such as assessment for learning

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Achievements and standards are outstanding at Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form and are good in Key Stage 4. Learners come to the school with very positive attitudes and higher than average attainment at Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 9 learners achieve standards well above average in National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 3. Learners' progress in this stage is very high. At Key Stage 4 achievements are very good. The proportion gaining 5 passes at any grade has been well above the national average for the past 5 years. In addition, the proportion of learners who achieve 5 A* - C GCSE passes has been well above the national average for 5 years. In 2005 77% of learners entered achieved 5 or more A*-C passes. At Key Stage 4, learners make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Learners with specific identified learning needs make satisfactory progress overall and those with a good attendance record make rather better progress. In the sixth form achievements are outstanding. GCE A level pass rates have been at or above 98% for the past 2 years. In 2005 some 56% of all grades achieved by Year 13 students were A or B. Retention is very high and progression to higher education is excellent. Young people make outstanding progress in the sixth form.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Learners enjoy being at school and have excellent attitudes to work. They place a high value on learning and are very enthusiastic in lessons. When work is difficult they try hard and they cooperate very well with each other to solve problems. They take the initiative in lessons, work well independently and a significant number attend out of school activities. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around the school. There are few permanent exclusions and rare incidents of racism and serious misbehaviour are dealt with appropriately. In classrooms learners are very cooperative. Around the school, even where space is cramped, learners are very orderly. There are very few accidents and learners feel very safe. At break and lunchtime relationships between learners are relaxed and harmonious. Learners have a very good understanding of health issues. They have responded well to the school's emphasis on healthy eating. The citizenship curriculum is developing learners' understanding of sexual health issues effectively. Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall. They reflect on their lives and those of others and are very alert to ethical issues. The contributions that learners make to the school, including mentoring and peer reading, are outstanding. In addition learners are regularly engaged with the local community and successfully raise money each year for a variety of charities. Across the school learners are very well prepared for their future economic well being through the personal, social and health education programme and work experience in Years 10 and 12.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Teaching and learning across the school are good and outstanding in the sixth form. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Excellent planning is a key strength of the provision and the activities in lessons are varied and challenging so that all learners are fully stretched. Teachers actively foster good working relationships with their learners which enable them to make good and often outstanding progress. Learning support assistants are highly effective and well deployed. The needs of learners with specific identified learning needs are effectively diagnosed. Learners enjoy their work and present it carefully. Teachers use good specialist knowledge to involve groups in discussions based on well-focused questioning. Year 8 history learners sensitively devised and acted out a scene showing the negative impact of environmental changes on communities whilst studying plains Indians. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively and encourage learners to use it to research and present ideas. Learners' work is regularly marked and they are given constructive suggestions to help them improve. The school is currently reviewing ways in which learners receive feedback on standards reached in all subjects so that targets can be more effectively set.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum is outstanding in the sixth form and is good in Years 7 to 11. The programme for Key Stage 3 is broad and balanced. Learners are offered a wide variety of subjects at GCSE at Key Stage 4 where all study a modern foreign language and ICT and religious studies GCSE short courses. A growing number of vocational courses across Key Stage 4 and the sixth form are in place and enhance the curriculum. Overall the curriculum meets the needs of the learners allowing them good access to relevant national qualifications. Broader workplace skills are developed through the citizenship programme and work experience. Both Year 10 and Year 12 students complete a week of work experience each year. The provision of sport, in lessons and after school, is excellent; particularly notable is the junior sports leaders award completed in Year 11. The school provides a wide variety of musical and cultural enrichment activities to broaden young people's horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents and learners are right to think that the care, guidance and support provided for learners are excellent. There are rigorous systems in place for the monitoring of

learners' academic progress and for providing follow up support where there is underachievement. There are similarly rigorous systems in place for tackling poor behaviour and there is an effective behaviour policy. The school values individuals and provides considerable support for learners who are vulnerable and have learning difficulties. A particularly strong feature is the mentoring for individual learners provided by teachers and by other trained learners. Statutory requirements for Child Protection are met and arrangements are rigorous. The learners are very well-prepared for each stage of their education. They place a high value on the support and guidance provided when they join the school and when they make decisions about subject choices or higher education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that leadership and management are outstanding. The head teacher provides clear vision dedicated to raising standards and focussed on improvements. She is ably supported by a cohesive senior leadership team working with common purpose. Staff are carefully recruited and teachers are well qualified and experienced. As a result learners make very good progress in their studies. The organisation and deployment of resources is outstanding and the school represents excellent value for money. The school makes very good use of its accommodation and site despite some narrow and crowded corridors. Statutory requirements are met and the governing body discharges its duties well. Very good partnerships with the community continue to develop through links with, for example, the Effingham Learning Partnership and the Guildford 14-19 Partnership. Learners have benefited from the award of Specialist Science College status especially through strengthened links with local primary schools. Recent developments, led by the head teacher and senior managers, have resulted in changes to the curriculum. As a consequence some vocational courses have been added at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form to meet the needs of all learners more fully. Managers, teachers and support staff work hard to promote equality of opportunity and to combat discrimination. The result is a very well run school with a calm and tolerant atmosphere. There are highly effective systems in place for collecting information about performance across the school. The school improvement plan is clear and well structured. It is very effectively supported by a well established mechanism for reviewing progress toward targets. Management information, such as the impact of school policies and the overall quality of teaching and learning, collected as part of the monitoring carried out by team leaders is not always analysed to get a secure strategic overview. The school richly deserves its high local reputation.

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?	1	1
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	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
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?	2	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
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?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
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

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

Following our visit to inspect your school on 1 and 2 March 2006, I write to tell you about our findings. Our main conclusion is that the Howard is an excellent school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the part you played in the inspection. A good deal of progress has been made since the last inspection in 2000. For instance the provision for learners with special educational needs has been improved, vocational courses added to the curriculum and the school now specialises in science. As a result there are more opportunities for you to study nationally recognised qualifications.

You attend a school that is calm and safe and you make very good progress with your studies. Your behaviour at school is excellent and this contributes to a positive atmosphere with an emphasis on learning. Teaching in lessons is good across the school and outstanding in the sixth form. Lessons are well planned and the activities you take part in are varied and challenging. Your progress is well monitored and assessments are good. Year and subject heads are very good indeed at monitoring your progress and analysing test and examination results. Teachers provide a very high standard of care and support. Tutorial periods are well organised and assemblies are informative. Careers information and guidance is excellent and good arrangements are in place to help you to move on to higher education or employment. In addition, very good collaboration with local junior schools helps Year 7 learners to settle in quickly when they arrive. Work experience and extra-curricular activities are very well organised. You have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of different activities. By playing sport and choosing healthy food in the canteen you are responding positively to the school's aim of encouraging you to adopt healthy lifestyles. Your excellent achievements as mentors and your contributions to the life of the school particularly impressed us.

The leadership and management of your school are outstanding. The governors support the school well and senior managers keep them fully informed of your achievements and developments at the school. This school gives excellent value for money and the equipment and accommodation are used very effectively. We have asked the school to: * improve the way senior managers analyse information that they collect in order to make standards even higher