



Putteridge High School and Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109685
LEA LUTON LEA
Inspection number 282904
Inspection dates 29 November 2005 to 30 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Margaret Jones LI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Putteridge Road
School category	Community		LU2 8HJ
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 415791
Number on roll	1113	Fax number	01582 419357
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Derek Christopher
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr. Tony Smith

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 29 November 2005 - 30 November 2005	Inspection number 282904
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located on the edge of Luton and because of its location has a small catchment area. Students, therefore, are drawn from a wide area, with over 20 primary schools. A significant proportion of students are drawn from disadvantaged wards which suffer from economic deprivation and overcrowding. The students' attainment on entry to the school is generally good. The number of students with learning difficulties is slightly above the national average, and there is a special unit at the school for 25 students with physical disabilities and visual impairment. Approximately one third of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number of those for whom English is not their first language is high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school now provides a satisfactory standard of education and has regained its sense of pride and purpose. Since the last monitoring inspection in June 2005 results in public examinations have improved to around the national average in most subjects. Students are now making satisfactory progress, although some of them could still do better. The ethos of the school has been transformed. Students have positive attitudes and enjoy their lessons. Behaviour is good, and the isolated incidents of poor behaviour are managed well. Students report that the amount of bullying in the school has reduced dramatically and whatever is reported is dealt with effectively. Teaching is much better than it was. It is now satisfactory because teachers' morale has improved and they have higher expectations. Marking and assessment is helping pupils know what to do to get better, but not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work for students. Changes made to the curriculum to include vocational education have helped to motivate students to want to learn. Provision for students with learning and physical disabilities has improved and is now satisfactory. The school's contribution to the health and well-being of the students needs to be developed further. These changes have come about through the drive and commitment of the headteacher, ably supported by a consultant leader and the local authority adviser. Some members of the senior team are contributing well to school improvement but others need to develop their leadership skills further. Accurate self-evaluation has led to effective action being taken. The school has proved that it can make the necessary changes to become even better. Value for money is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that all students achieve all they are capable of by matching the work more carefully to their different abilities. - Improve standards in art, history, drama, physical education and modern languages to bring them up to the level of other subjects. - Make sure that all those in leadership posts are key players in the continuing success of the school. - Improve the school's contribution to the health and well-being of the students by enabling them to make healthy eating choices.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Recently, achievement and standards have improved significantly and the school's own assessment information shows that many students are in a good position to achieve well in the future. Overall, students' start at the school in Year 7 with above average test results from their primary schools. As they move through the school most make steady progress but some still do not make as much progress as they should. The progress of students with learning difficulties is satisfactory, although those with physical disabilities make good progress. The GCSE results for 2005 are the best the

school has achieved for a number of years, particularly the proportion of students achieving 5 or more A* to C grades, which rose by 16 percentage points to 50%, and included some passes at the highest grades of A and A*. However, standards achieved at GCSE are not equally good in all subjects. For example, the 2005 results in drama, history, modern languages, art and physical education were notably lower than in other subjects. The 2005 results of the national tests at the end of Year 9 were higher than those for 2004 and above the national average in English and mathematics, although too few of the more able students gained the higher levels. Generally, girls reach higher standards than boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students enjoy their education and have positive attitudes towards their work. Attendance and punctuality are good. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students have good opportunities for reflection on the thought for the week. In a Year 7 registration class, for example, students were able to explain clearly why race, colour of skin or religion should make no difference to the way people are treated. They are also taught the difference between right and wrong in guidance lessons and through effective behaviour management strategies. In lessons and around the school, students were well behaved. When minor incidents of disruption occur, they are dealt with effectively by staff and students respond well. Students adopt safe practices because the school effectively provides a safe and secure environment for them. The promotion of healthy lifestyles is satisfactory. Although students exercise well in order to stay healthy, not enough is done to promote their healthy eating. Students feel their opinions are listened to through the work of the Year and School Councils. Students make a positive contribution to the community. For example, they support charitable organisations, help out at a local special school and have taken the initiative in ensuring a successful anti-bullying week. Through the 'Guardian Angel' system, older students support younger ones. Students also prepare well for their future life after school, through for example, the Young Enterprise initiative and good quality careers education and guidance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

While the vast majority of teaching is at least satisfactory, it is better for older students who are preparing for examinations. A minority of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 remains inadequate. The least effective learning takes place when teachers provide their students with uninteresting activities or tasks that are pitched at a level that does not meet their needs or capabilities. At these times, students lose interest and their attitudes and behaviour deteriorate and teachers do not always have the skills to refocus their learning. In most lessons, teachers have a good understanding of how their students learn most effectively. Good lesson plans identify clearly what it is

intended students will learn, and these learning outcomes are shared with students. Students are keen to learn and cooperate well in groups. Teachers have high expectations of students' behaviour, although the activities they provide are not always suitably challenging. Plenary sessions are used effectively to evaluate pupils' learning, and in the best lessons pupils are full participants in these reviews. The school is developing good systems for assessing the students' progress and for setting them appropriate targets. Most staff make effective use of the assessment information they have on their students, and this is contributing to the improvements in achievement and standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides all of its students with a good range of learning opportunities, although the citizenship programme remains underdeveloped. Students who have learning difficulties and disabilities have the same opportunities as their classmates to follow a curriculum that meets their needs, interests and capabilities. All statutory requirements are met and teaching time meets recommendations. The curriculum is enriched well by a programme of visits, visitors into school and activities that take place after school or in holiday periods, particularly in sport and music. In Years 7 to 9, students follow a curriculum that is broad and balanced. A particularly well designed and structured curriculum for Years 10 and 11 enables students to follow a good range of courses that lead to nationally recognised accreditation. Students supplement a common core curriculum of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education with subjects chosen from a wide range of options. All students have the opportunity to study a vocational course, but this is not compulsory and a small minority choose not to do so. The range of courses leading to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) is enhanced significantly by the school's strong links with the SPA Consortium of neighbouring schools and colleges that enable students to follow courses at other establishments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are good systems in place for monitoring attendance, personal development and academic progress. The school's procedures for protecting the welfare of students and ensuring their safety are rigorous and reviewed regularly. There are detailed risk assessments carried out both at a whole-school level and within departments each year, which are monitored effectively by governors. Year 9 students receive good support and guidance in choosing courses for Year 10. Effective links with external agencies, such as the Connexions service, and good provision for careers guidance ensures that older students make meaningful and thoughtful career choices. The inclusion manager works closely with other professionals and parents to ensure that students make good progress. 'Looked after' students, for example, have well-conceived personal education plans, which promote their greater inclusion and good academic progress. Strong links with local schools and colleges have a positive impact on students'

academic, vocational, personal and social achievements. Target setting has improved so that teachers now accommodate a wider range of learning needs in lessons. As a result, students with learning difficulties and those with sensory impairments or physical disabilities make at least satisfactory and often good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision of the high standards he wishes the school to attain and he has successfully communicated these aspirations to the whole school community. The staff have worked hard and produced an accurate and thorough analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Sustained action has been taken to effectively address the issues identified. This work has been much helped by the efforts of a very effective consultant leader and positive support from the local authority. Parents have been fully involved in the regeneration of the school through the 'Putteridge Partnership' which has working groups of parents covering most aspects of the school's life. The school knows it has further work to do in establishing stronger links with the local community. Leadership has been strengthened through well targeted professional development. Effective day-to-day management structures and systems are now in place to help the school run efficiently. A clear system of line management has been introduced and managers at all levels understand what is expected of them. Many staff in management roles are relatively inexperienced, but have made a good start. Not all those in leadership positions fully share the vision of the headteacher, and therefore practice is not yet consistent across the school. The role of governors has been strengthened and there are more formal and effective systems in place for the governing body to hold the school to account. Progress since the last HMI monitoring visit has been good. The capacity of managers to move the school forward in the future is satisfactory. In the short term it will benefit from the continued support of the local authority and consultant leader, but there are signs that in the longer term the school can support itself successfully.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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

Thank you for all the help you gave the inspectors when we visited Putteridge on 29 and 30 November. We enjoyed talking with you. We learned about how you think your school has improved over the last few years and how you now enjoy and value all that it has to offer. You told us that you are proud of Putteridge; we think you are right to be so. It has improved so much it no longer requires extra monitoring visits from inspectors and we are sure it will get even better in the future. In particular, aspects we think have improved are; - Examination results have gone up in most subjects. - Most of you are making satisfactory progress although some of you could do even better. - The atmosphere of the school is much better and it is a welcoming and safe place to work. Most students now behave well and you told us that there is far less bullying and that any incidents reported are dealt with effectively. - Teaching is better than it was and teachers expect much more of you now. Good marking is showing you what you have to do to improve your work. - The vocational options for Years 10 and 11 really interest you and make you want to learn. - Support for those of you with learning difficulties and physical disabilities has got better. - The school is run and managed more efficiently and with greater drive and purpose. There are a few things we have suggested to your headteacher which could help the school improve further: - Challenging work should be given to all of you so you all do as well as you are able. - More attention should be paid to some of the subjects where results aren't as good as other subjects. - Even further improvement could be made to how the school is managed. - You should be taught more about healthy diets so you can make healthy eating choices. We wish all of you success in your studies and future careers and thank you once again for your help with this inspection.