



# Weobley High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116952  
**LEA** Herefordshire  
**Inspection number** 282953  
**Inspection dates** 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Harrett HMI

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Burton Wood
<b>School category</b>	Community		Weobley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Hereford, Herefordshire HR4 8ST
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01544 318 159
<b>Number on roll</b>	444	<b>Fax number</b>	01544 312 900
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Marcus Williams
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 May 1998	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Woodrow

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 6 December 2005 - 7 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 282953
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Weobley High School is a small, mixed community comprehensive school. Nearly all the pupils are from a White British background. A higher than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs, including 4.9% with formal statements. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is similar to the national average. The proportion of the pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 10%, which is lower than average. The school has achieved Artsmark Silver and Sportsmark with distinction. When the school was inspected in May 2004, it was judged to require special measures.

## 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.

Inspection evidence supports the school's view that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory which represents significant progress since the last inspection. The school's capacity to improve is good and the leadership of the headteacher is very good. The school has a thorough knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and takes appropriate action to improve its provision. Attainment is broadly average and the pupils' make satisfactory progress in their learning. The pupils are well cared for and their personal development is good. They are well behaved and respectful. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features but not all the lessons engage the pupils in their learning and the assessment of their work is inconsistent. Although the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures is inadequately addressed. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the assessment of the pupils' work in lessons and in marking so that the next steps for learning are clearer to them.
- Increase the proportion of lessons across the school which require active participation by the pupils.
- Improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils enter the school with the skills and understanding expected for their age. At Key Stage 3, results in the national tests in 2005 were broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of the pupils who attained the expected Level 5 or better was higher than the national average in English and mathematics and slightly lower in science.

The pupils in Year 11 in 2005 attained standards that were better than those attained by the pupils in 2004. The proportion of the pupils who attained five GCSE passes rose from 93% in 2004 to 99% in 2005. The proportion that attained five good grades rose from 41% to 54%. In comparison with pupils nationally, the pupils made satisfactory progress. There was some variation between subjects and some underachievement in science and information and communication technology (ICT) but this was largely the legacy of unsatisfactory provision in these areas in the past. Girls attained better results than boys. The school sets suitably challenging targets for its pupils. At Key Stage 3 these were met in English and mathematics but not in science. At Key Stage 4 the targets were exceeded.

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

### **Grade: 2**

There have been improvements in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as a result of the introduction of a good 'values' curriculum in all year groups. Daily tutor sessions are used well to explore a range of suitable themes over the year and regular assemblies reinforce this programme. However, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures is limited and this aspect of their cultural education is insufficiently addressed across the school.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy school and show a commitment to their learning. They have good relationships with teachers and the atmosphere in the school is calm and respectful. Pupils appreciate the support which many teachers give them outside lessons. Attendance has improved and is now good, being above 94%, with no year group currently falling below 92%.

Pupils are encouraged to adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle. Recent improvements in the school's catering facilities provide a good choice of attractive and healthy dietary options which are popular with the pupils. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a good range of sporting activities.

Pupils contribute to the local community through a range of well supported charitable activities and by links with other community facilities such as the nearby hospice. There is a good range of clubs and activities which are well attended by the pupils. Pupils participate effectively in school life through the highly regarded school council, the 'ear to help' peer mentoring scheme and other groups which attend to such matters as improving the school environment. The pupils are justly proud of their school and of their contribution to its improvement since the last inspection. The wide range of opportunities to extend their skills and the support that they are given in lessons provide the pupils with a good foundation for life in the adult world.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory with some good features. In the best lessons the pace was brisk and purposeful. Pupils were clear about what they were going to learn and knew how to approach the tasks. They thrived on being challenged to get involved in activities which were meaningful and relevant and particularly enjoyed working in practical ways. Skilled questioning prompted the pupils to extend their thinking and discuss their ideas in depth. The lessons were clearly part of carefully considered units of work and the pupils could easily reflect on the progress they were making from lesson to lesson. In the most effective lessons, particularly in modern foreign languages, design and technology and music, the pupils were given regular and constructive feedback through marking which concentrated on their achievements and the next steps in their learning. They

were also expected to reflect on their learning as the lessons proceeded, particularly in an outstanding food lesson where learning was reviewed and reinforced after each small learning step. However, these crucial aspects of effective assessment were inconsistent across the school. In some classrooms the marking of work was superficial and irregular with too few examples of comments giving precise advice about improving subject specific skills. In these lessons the pupils were given few opportunities to reflect on their progress and the pupils tended to remain passive receivers of the teacher's wisdom rather than active participants in their own learning. However, the standard of teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and was often good.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory across the school. At Key Stage 3 the pupils follow a balanced programme of appropriate courses. The school offers a suitable range of GCSE courses and has a satisfactorily flexible response to the needs of individual pupils. The personalised learning programme for 14 pupils in Year 10 has resulted in improvements in both attendance and behaviour. Some pupils follow an alternative curriculum which enables them to acquire key skills alongside some workplace learning and others are following well planned vocational courses provided in conjunction with local colleges. As yet there are few vocational GCSE courses offered but the school is sensibly looking at the possibility of shared timetable arrangements with other schools. The school is increasingly able to interest pupils with relevant and meaningful activities, often with a work related dimension. For example, all pupils in Year 10 follow a vocational course in ICT which allows them to develop important key skills. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The programme for gifted and talented pupils is less coherently planned although provision for these pupils is satisfactory. A wide range of extracurricular clubs and activities enhance and extend pupils' learning and there is a sound range of educational visits and trips. Local employers and the Rotary Club enhance the curriculum through offering work experience and by visits to the school to participate in enterprise days.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is a caring, safe and secure learning environment where the virtues of tolerance and respect are valued and effectively promoted. Pupils feel confident that they can approach a teacher if they have problems or concerns and they also value the support that they receive from the specially trained peer counsellors. The arrangements for child protection are good and staff have had appropriate training. Liaison with other agencies is effective. The school monitors the pattern of incidents of misbehaviour well. It makes good use of the information to identify those pupils who would benefit from specific support. Procedures for promoting attendance at school are good.

The school monitors the progress being made by each pupil carefully and sets each pupil targets for their performance at the end of Years 9 and 11 on this basis. Pupils feel well informed about their targets and progress and are able to discuss them well. Parents are effectively involved in the target setting and are regularly informed about their children's progress. Pupils are well advised about their choices at the end of Year 9 and Year 11.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of the school have improved considerably since the last inspection. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She has instilled a positive ethos across the school, creating a caring community in which expected standards of behaviour and shared values are clear and consistent. Rigorous and regular monitoring has produced an accurate and honest profile of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good strategic planning has improved the quality of provision and its impact across the school. Parents are appropriately involved in the school's self-evaluation by means of regular questionnaires and opportunities to come to school for coffee mornings with the headteacher. The pupils are also involved through questionnaires and the school council. The improvement in communication with families since the last inspection has been good. The headteacher has built a team of senior leaders who understand their roles and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They work together well as a team and individually and their effectiveness has resulted in the good progress that the school has made since the last inspection. Although the quality of middle leadership has improved and some subjects are well led and managed some inconsistencies persist. The expectations of middle leaders and the suitable range of accompanying training are having an impact on their overall quality, which is satisfactory overall.

Governance has improved since the time of the last inspection. The governing body provides the school with appropriate challenge and support. Meetings are regular and focused on school improvement.

The leadership and management of the school have been instrumental in steering the school's progress since the last inspection and ensuring that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Capacity for improvement is good.

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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>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	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

<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**

Weobley High School Burton Wood Weobley, Hereford Herefordshire HR4 8ST

8 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome which you gave us when we inspected your school recently. Your openness and willingness to share your views about the school helped us a lot. I am very pleased to report that your school no longer requires special measures. You should all feel justly proud of what you have done to bring about this significant improvement.

These are the things that we particularly liked about the school.

- Your behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- You play an important role in improving the school through the school council.
- The school makes sure that your personal development is good.
- The school cares for you well and makes sure that advice and guidance are good.
- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection.

We have asked the school to improve three things.

- The assessment of your work, in lessons and through marking, needs to be more consistent.
- Although teaching and learning have improved we want the school to make sure that you are given every opportunity to get involved in your learning.
- We want the school to make sure that you learn more about other cultures.

Congratulations to you all.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Harrett Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools