



Shenley Brook End School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131185
LEA Milton Keynes LEA
Inspection number 285352
Inspection dates 22 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Jennifer Smith 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 inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Walbank Grove
School category	Foundation		Shenley Brook End
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Milton Keynes MK5 7ZT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01908520264
Number on roll	1243	Fax number	01908520265
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Lewis
Date of previous inspection	22 June 2006	Headteacher	Mrs Vanessa Ray

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	22 June 2006 - 22 June 2006	285352

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. During the one day inspection paired lesson observations were carried out with senior leaders. The inspectors met with the headteacher, two governors, a range of senior staff and curriculum leaders and talked to many pupils seeking their views about the school.

Description of the school

Shenley Brook End School is a larger than average comprehensive school with a growing sixth form. It is located in Shenley Brook End on the western edge of Milton Keynes. The majority of pupils are white British, and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is considerably lower than the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below that found nationally; while just over 2% of pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is broadly in line with the national average.

The school was awarded specialist status for mathematics and computing in September 2004. It has also achieved Healthy Schools, Artsmark, Sportsmark awards and Investor in People status. The school sports facilities are used by the community and there is an extensive adult education service.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'We give teachers a purpose, they give us a future', is how one pupil fittingly described the school.

Shenley Brook End is an outstanding school that has managed very effectively to blend the best of traditional values, high expectations of behaviour and achievement, adherence to school uniform and professionalism amongst its teachers, together with forward thinking innovations, such as how best to teach pupils using modern technologies and considering the specific ways individual pupils learn best. Parents reported to inspectors that they are overwhelmingly positive about the education provided for their children, which is also reflected in surveys undertaken by the school of student and parental views. The school is consequently oversubscribed.

Outstanding leadership from the headteacher and her senior team provide very clear direction for the school's future development and they are ably supported by the governing body. The headteacher and her leadership team have correctly identified the strengths of the school and areas for future development. Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that overall its effectiveness is outstanding. Well founded structures and approaches to management issues ensure that the school is very successful. A key to its effectiveness is the consistency with which new approaches are debated widely and then put into practice.

Pupils achieve well and their standards are well above national averages by the end of Year 9 and 11. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has been considerably enhanced by the school's specialist status. This has enabled very good provision for technology in school and effective outreach work within the community, in particular with local primary schools. Pupils have very good attitudes to their studies; behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school and bullying, where it occurs, is effectively managed.

The curriculum has appropriately changed as the school has increased in size over the last nine years; the school is now broadening the structure and range of courses on offer for 14-19 year olds. An extensive variety of extracurricular activities is offered, in which pupils are actively encouraged to participate. Pupils are well supported and guided in their transition from primary to secondary school, and from Year 11 and the sixth form into employment, further training and education or university. The school has managed the induction of two years groups in September 2005 very well, ensuring that these pupils have settled well following reorganisation of education locally.

A sixth former said, 'it (the school) has highly effective systems, it's full of opportunities no matter what your abilities and overall it is an absolutely brilliant school' ...perhaps the best endorsement a school could wish for!

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form is growing and continuing to improve. Almost all the students complete their courses, making good progress and achieving good standards. The curriculum is largely academic but is expanding. Students contribute to the school community as a whole in a range of ways, for example through the 'school service programme', and receive strong encouragement to enter higher education, which the majority achieve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with standards that are similar to the national average but leave with standards that are well above. Evidence of pupils' excellent progress as they move up through the school emerged from discussions with pupils, in the lessons observed and from their test and examination results in Years 9, 11 and in the sixth form. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make very good progress because of the careful support they are given. The school sets demanding academic targets and pupils rise to the challenge. No groups of pupils underachieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Shenley Brook End is a school that pupils want to attend, and where they flourish. Their enjoyment of the wide range of experiences they are offered, in and beyond the classroom, is evident. The school expects much of them, and promotes their personal development extremely effectively; and they respond very well. The attendance rate is very good. Although there are a number of exclusions, most are short term and, together with a consistently implemented and carefully monitored 'behaviour for learning' policy they reinforce the school's high expectations. The behaviour of the pupils in classrooms and around the building is very good. They show a commitment to healthy lifestyles which is well supported by the school's provision. All pupils study GCSE physical education and engage in extra-curricular sport, and are able to choose healthy options in the canteen. Many contribute to charitable fund raising activities, some of which are organised by the enthusiastic school council. The school's council also helps to manage a 'bullying box' which provides a route by which those pupils who have concerns about bullying, as a few do, to raise them, with justified confidence that the response will be effective. The pupils' future economic well-being is promoted outstandingly well through business links, activities that foster enterprise and opportunities to develop the skills they need, for example, through a course on retail skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and some lessons are outstanding. Well planned lessons with high expectations of all pupils characterise the best lessons. Teachers use new technologies, such as interactive whiteboards and computers with confidence during lessons. Teachers are aware of the variety of learning styles that pupils use and seek to meet these in their approaches to teaching. Pupils' positive attitudes and very good behaviour ensure that effective learning takes place; they participate well in class discussions, and in individual and group tasks. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and in the vast majority of lessons make very good progress. Pupils reported enthusiastically to inspectors that they feel that their teachers give them a great deal of encouragement enabling them to do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The curriculum opportunities have expanded and developed as the school has grown, and are now very good. All pupils take a GCSE in PE and ICT as well as a range of other choices. Appropriate thought has been given to ensuring that the curriculum reflects the needs of all pupils, providing a significant academic strand, opportunities for pupils to study vocational courses and an innovative work experience and college linked course. The curriculum is enriched significantly by an outstanding range of extracurricular activities, before and after school as well as lunchtime. A noteworthy programme has been organised for pupils who are gifted and talented including, for some, membership of the national association of gifted and talented youth (NAGTY). Currently, the school is carefully considering the possibilities of 'fast tracking' options in Years 7 to 9.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This begins for the pupils before they even arrive at the school, through an induction process that includes a 20 minute interview with each prospective pupil and his or her parents, conducted by the head of year. This exemplary arrangement, which has helped the school to accommodate two intakes at the beginning of the current school year, is followed by close monitoring of the pupils' academic and personal progress through the school, with intervention and support for those at risk of underachieving. The support for vulnerable pupils, including several who use wheelchairs, is particularly good. The school's links with other agencies, co-ordinated by the pupil inclusion officer and the matron, are excellent, and involve close working relationships with the educational welfare service, Connexions, the mental health service and the police.

Programmes of citizenship and personal, social and health education provide suitable guidance and opportunities to take responsibility.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Staff, pupils and parents commented on the approachability and very effective leadership of the headteacher and her senior team. The leadership group communicate very effectively with the rest of the school, ensuring that all staff, including those teachers who are newly qualified, have a clear idea of the priorities for the school. In describing one of these priorities, the 'behaviour for learning' initiative, a new teacher to the school said that 'it gives you massive confidence in the classroom'. This typifies the consistency of approach across the school. The school uses data well, including a sophisticated central data management system in order to set realistic targets for pupils. Governors have a clear understanding of the school and are fully involved in the drawing up of the school improvement plan.

Professional development of all staff, teaching and non teaching, is considered an important part of performance review. As one non teaching member of staff said, 'the school has been very supportive of my development, the headteacher has challenged and developed me; I have grown in confidence and been able to update my skills.' A culture of encouraging teachers to be reflective practitioners has been successfully introduced, including the development of coaching skills. Opportunities exist for staff to be part of the computer based learning network, which is co-led by the school on behalf of Milton Keynes.

The self evaluation strategies in the school are very good and provide a very good base from which the school sets its improvement agenda at whole school and at department level. Staffing structures have been appropriately adjusted in line with recent national priorities for workforce reform and teachers report that these changes have significantly helped in their work. The last inspection report in 2001 was also very positive. The school has shown its capacity to improve further year on year. It is working hard towards its aspirational targets for ensuring that, over time, teaching will be outstanding. The school provides excellent value for money.

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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?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
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	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

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	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
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	1	

The quality of provision

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

Pupils

You will remember that along with another inspector, I visited your school on the 22 June. I would like to thank you for sharing your views with us on that day, you will see that we have included a comment from one of the pupils as the opening line to the full report, which we hope that many of you will take the opportunity to read. We think this comment sums up your school very well. Shenley Brook End is indeed an outstanding school.

You told us that the school sets high expectations of you and that teachers are not only approachable but provide you with an excellent education both in lessons and in the large number of extracurricular activities on offer, which include visits in this country and as far afield as Venezuela! We hope that as you move on through the school you take every opportunity to engage with these enriching activities. Many sixth formers are about to go on to university having spent six very busy but highly productive years in the school. We would like to think that you will also aspire to continue your education beyond school. The specialist status of your school has provided very good opportunities for you and the mk.learn facility is excellent.

We also judge that the school is very successful because of the commitment and dedication of the headteacher and her staff; they have set a clear direction for the school and are keen to ensure that continued very good behaviour sets the tone for learning. You told us all about the policy of 'behaviour for learning'; we think that this ensures effective learning takes place throughout the school and hope that you will all continue to support this approach. The senior staff and the governors are currently looking to increase the range of vocational courses on offer in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. We agree that this is the right move to make to broaden the curriculum further. We wish you all continued success in your studies at Shenley Brook End and hope that you have a safe and enjoyable summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector