

Villiers High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101928
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	286226
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Russell HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Asif
Headteacher	Ms J Strang
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002
School address	Boyd Avenue Southall UB1 3BT
Telephone number	020 8813 8001
Fax number	020 8574 3071

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Villiers High School is a slightly larger than average sized comprehensive school serving Southall. The school population is ethnically diverse: almost all students come from Black or minority ethnic groups, over half have Indian heritage and most have English as an additional language. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above the national average. Levels of social and economic deprivation are above average. The school is a specialist technology college. Over the coming years, the school will be developing joint sixth form provision with two other local schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Villiers High School provides a good standard of education.

Care, guidance and support are excellent and support students' outstanding personal development and well-being. Students are extremely positive about school and their enjoyment of education is excellent. They report that they feel very safe and well cared for. Behaviour is very good and better than at the last inspection: the vast majority of students behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. A particular strength of the school is the way in which it has formed links with an immense range of businesses, universities, organisations and other countries. These links are used to provide students with an impressive range of enriching experiences. Students appreciate these opportunities and they make an excellent contribution to their personal development.

Students' standards at the end of Year 11 are slightly above the national average. This represents good achievement given students' starting points and capabilities when they enter the school. Students generally make greater progress during Key Stage 4 than Key Stage 3. Although students taking GCSE examination in 2006 made less progress than in preceding years, the school has taken effective action to remedy this situation. Consequently, students currently in the school are making good progress and are on track to achieve challenging targets at GCSE. While still satisfactory, higher ability students make less progress than others.

The majority of lessons are good and some are outstanding. Students are enthusiastic about the quality of teaching and support that teachers provide, although they also say that a small number of lessons are not as good. In a few lessons behaviour is not managed well by the teacher and this affects the learning of the whole class. The school introduced a new Key Stage 4 curriculum structure three years ago. Students are now allocated to one of three pathways based on their capabilities and previous achievement. Students in the first two pathways do fewer optional GCSEs and spend more time on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school has made this change to try to ensure that these students achieve well in a fewer number of courses. Timetabling constraints limited some of the potential benefits of the new curriculum in its first year. These issues have now been resolved, although it is not yet possible to say whether the changes will indeed enable students to achieve more. The school has made changes to the Key Stage 3 curriculum to help students develop the skills to become more confident, better learners. While too early to measure the impact of this on achievement, students are very positive about this change and can explain its benefits very clearly.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and other senior staff provide clear direction and purpose. The school's specialist status has been used well to support the school's provision. Leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development and there is strong capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor the changes made to the Key Stage 4 curriculum to ensure that they meet students' needs fully and help them to achieve as much as possible
- Improve the achievement of higher ability students
- Improve the quality of teaching in the small proportion of lessons that are less effective

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

While there is considerable fluctuation between year groups, students generally enter the school with standards that are somewhat below the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stages 3 are below national averages, representing satisfactory progress given students' starting points and capabilities. Students make greater progress during Key Stage 4. Their overall progress during their time in school is good and they leave with standards that are slightly above the national average. Higher ability students make satisfactory rather than good progress.

GCSE results have risen in recent years. In particular, the proportion of students attaining five or more higher grades including English and mathematics has risen significantly and is now above the national average. Although GCSE results last year were similar to those in previous years, these students had slightly higher attainment when they entered the school and they made satisfactory rather than good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Students are well-behaved, confident, friendly and enthusiastic. Attendance is consistently higher than the national average, despite the fact that students sometimes take time off to visit relatives overseas. The school has done much recently to ensure that students take regular exercise and eat healthily. Students develop personal qualities which augur well for their future success and economic well-being. Notably, all but a very small number of students progress to further education or training when they leave.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities for students to contribute to the school and local community. As part of this, the school recently trained a team of Year 8 and 9 students as lesson observers. The students observe lessons and feed back directly to teachers. The way in which the school uses a very wide range of links and partnerships to support students' personal development is particularly impressive. There are extensive links with a number of universities and a very large number of students have benefited from a range of activities including residential visits, masterclasses and work with university students. The school has excellent international links with 12 countries in Europe, USA and India. There are also extensive links with the Arts, through projects such as 'Migrating Swallows' which won the Princess Diana Award. This impressive range of enrichment opportunities provides strong support for students' outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The majority of lessons are good and some are outstanding. Strengths of the teaching and learning include good planning, excellent relationships, a very positive classroom environment and good support for students. A small number of lessons are less effective. Students sometimes feel that the teacher dominates the lesson too much and gives them too few opportunities to contribute or work in pairs or groups. In some lessons the work is not always matched closely enough to the learning needs of different groups of students. The school is aware of these issues and has well thought out and effective strategies in place to make improvements.

The school introduced a 'Learning to Learn' programme into Key Stage 3 a number of years ago. This is an approach used across subjects to help students develop the skills needed to become effective learners, such as perseverance, teamwork and planning. The first students to experience this programme are now in Year 9. They report that the approach has become increasingly embedded in lessons over time. Year 7, 8 and 9 students are enthusiastic about 'Learning to Learn' and can explain its benefits. There is evidence that it is helping students' confidence and enjoyment of learning, although it is not yet possible to measure its impact on their achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. A particular strength is the way in which the school uses its outstanding partnership work to enrich students' experiences. Changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum were made three years ago to reduce the number of GCSEs taken by some students. Within this structure, students have access to a range of options, with some opportunities to take more vocational or applied courses. There are plans to increase the vocational options taken by students in coming years.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its students. This helps to ensure that their personal development and well-being are outstanding and that students achieve well. Very effective strategies are in place to meet students' complex and sometimes challenging needs. Arrangements for protecting and safeguarding students are robust. The very small amount of bullying that does occur is dealt with very well and students have complete confidence that the school will solve any problems that they have quickly and effectively. The way in which the school sets targets for students and monitors their progress is good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other senior leaders are a strong team who provide very good direction for the school's development. The school has strong and well developed systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and to support its development.

A number of changes have been made this year to the way in which middle leaders work together. These changes have been very well received by middle leaders. Although very recent, they are already helping them to make a greater contribution to the school's work. The school's plans are being well used by middle leaders to focus their work together and direct their actions, although the way in which the impact of these actions can be measured and tested is not always sharp enough to support close monitoring of their success. The way in which governors help to direct and monitor the school's work has improved in recent years and is now satisfactory.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2
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
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 June 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Villiers High School, Southall, UB1 3BT

Thank you for your help and for taking the time to talk to us during the recent inspection. I am writing to you to tell you about our main findings. We judged the school to be good with some outstanding features.

The school works hard to care for you and to ensure that you are very well supported. This helps to ensure that you enjoy school very much, that you attend well and that you can benefit from the opportunities that are provided. There is a lovely atmosphere in the school. We were very impressed by how friendly, well behaved and confident you are. The school offers an incredible range of opportunities to you through its work with universities, businesses, other organisations and its links with other countries. You clearly enjoy and benefit from these opportunities.

The school helps you to achieve well and to get good GCSE examination results. However, very able students don't make quite as much progress as most other students and we have asked the school to work on this. The school has made changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum recently so that students now follow one of three pathways. This is quite new and it is difficult to see yet whether this is helping you achieve as much as possible. We have asked the school to monitor this closely.

Teaching and learning in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers help and support you very well. You are very enthusiastic about the quality of teaching in the school. You did tell us though that a small number of lessons are not as good and we have asked the school to work on this. In a few lessons, the behaviour of one or two students can get in the way of the learning of others.

The school has good leaders who know what to do to make it even better. We wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Russell
Her Majesty's Inspector