



Heath Park Business & Enterprise College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104396
Local Authority Wolverhampton
Inspection number 286929
Inspection date 21 November 2006
Reporting inspector Bob Roberts HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Prestwood Road
School category	Community		Wolverhampton
Age range of pupils	11–18		WV11 1RD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 556360
Number on roll (school)	1164	Fax number	01902 556361
Number on roll (6th form)	187		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Karen Whitefoot
		Headteacher	Douglas Selkirk
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2003		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
11–18	21 November 2006	286929

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

Heath Park Business and Enterprise College is an above average sized secondary school located within the inner city area of Wolverhampton. It serves an area of high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average as is the proportion with learning difficulties. Almost half of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The range of ethnic backgrounds is increasing and a significant number of pupils have English as an additional language. The school has been a specialist Business and Enterprise College since September 2004 and this has helped to develop its standing in the community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Heath Park is an excellent school. It serves a community facing significant challenges and turns these potential barriers into opportunities for celebration and achievement. It has a culture of putting the interests and developments of every pupil first and a shared belief that all things are possible.

The main reason for this is the headteacher. Recently honoured in the Queen's birthday list by the award of an OBE, he has a passion for providing opportunities through education that inspires his staff and influences pupils. As a result, the school is led and managed exceptionally well. The headteacher is supported by a committed, forward-looking leadership team. It is no coincidence that a significant number of staff at the school are either former pupils or teachers who have had part of their training at the school and have wished to stay there.

The academic achievements of pupils are good. They make good progress from their starting points as a result of good teaching. Their personal development and wider achievements are outstanding. There is an extremely positive atmosphere around the school. Pupils enjoy school, generally behave well, and show pride in their school. Large numbers of pupils make positive contributions to the school and its local community. The diversity of pupils' backgrounds is celebrated and achievements of all kinds are shared. Almost all the pupils stay in education or training after the age of 16.

At its last inspection, the school was judged to have a highly innovative curriculum. Becoming a specialist school for business and enterprise has led to further innovation in the curriculum, which develops skills, meets the individual needs of pupils, and prepares them exceptionally well for later life. Pupils are very aware of the very high quality of care and support they receive. The school vision statement, 'Every pupil, Always in Focus', has real meaning in this exceptionally inclusive environment. There is very effective collaboration with a wide range of other services and agencies, combining to support vulnerable individuals. A relatively small number of parents responded to the questionnaire that accompanied this inspection, although the majority of these were supportive of the school.

There are ways the school could improve further. Teaching could be better still. Pupils could be better involved in consultation and decision making. Links with parents need to be improved. The heads of department, known as Leaders of Learning, show good leadership but further work is required to both monitor their work and evaluate their effectiveness. Having said all that, the capacity of the school to improve further is very good. This is due both to calculated strategies to develop leadership skills and, above all, to the faith in the school engendered by its leadership.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The school is part of a well established partnership for post-16 education with the City College and four other secondary schools. These arrangements provide pupils with a good range of courses from which to choose. Guidance is clear and comprehensive. Teachers communicate well when the teaching of courses is shared between institutions. Students are supported effectively and are fully involved in the life of the school. They have a clear idea of their targets and the progress they are making. Standards of attainment are slightly below national average but the progress pupils make from their individual starting points is satisfactory. The school recently had its first ever entrants to Oxford and Cambridge universities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop more effective ways of communicating with and involving parents.
- Continue to implement and evaluate the new self-review systems for departments and develop ways to evaluate departmental leadership.
- Raise achievement and standards further by improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

Pupils come into the school with standards of attainment that are broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress between Years 7 to 11 and their achievements at the end of Year 11 are good.

In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3, progress and standards have appeared to be below average, although in 2006 they came up to a satisfactory level. However, this is due to the unusual arrangements in the school whereby pupils take the tests at the end of Year 8 instead of at the end of Year 9. This compressed Key Stage 3 experience does bring benefits later on but the change to this system has affected the outcomes in the tests. By sharp contrast, the attainment of older pupils, at the end of Year 11, is by some measures exceptionally good. For example, the percentage of pupils achieving five or more higher grades at GCSE has been at least 80% for the last three years. The school has made it a strategic priority for as many pupils as possible to reach this level of attainment, widely seen as a key indicator and used as a platform for entry to higher level qualifications after Year 11. However, the percentage of pupils who have English and mathematics in their five or more higher grades is far smaller: 28% in 2005, rising to 40% in the 2006 examinations, but still slightly under the national figure. The school is very aware of this anomaly and is taking steps to improve this figure. Since becoming a specialist college, the school has met or exceeded all of its targets. Overall, the achievements and standards are good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spiritual development is effective through regular 'Moments of Reflection' with tutors and regular assemblies. There are close links with a local Anglican church and the festivals of all major faiths are celebrated. Pupils demonstrate very strong allegiance to the community of the school and its moral and social values. The many opportunities for making a contribution to the school and the local community often have a clear social and moral element. For example, there is an Amnesty International group and an active Youth against Crime group that leads activity sessions in local junior schools. All pupils follow an accredited citizenship course. Pupils are proud of the school. Attendance is good. On a cramped site with no playing fields and the potential for misbehaviour, pupils generally behave well. Large numbers participate in activities; both sports and the arts are flourishing. One pupil, qualified as a dance instructor, runs a well attended dance group. Over 50 pupils benefit from the responsibility attached to being a school prefect. There is a school council, although its role and impact is underdeveloped. Healthy Schools status was achieved in 2006 and pupils show satisfactory awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. In Years 9 to 11, pupils do not have the recommended two hours per week of physical education, but extra-curricular sporting opportunities are available.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is helped by the good relations that exist between teachers and pupils and the various types of extra support available for pupils who have particular learning needs. A wide range of teaching was seen during the inspection, enough to support the school's own view of its teaching as good. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the school is taking appropriate action to bring about the improvements necessary. Teachers make good use of data on the prior attainment levels of pupils to match tasks to their needs. Modern information technology equipment, such as interactive whiteboards, is used confidently by many teachers, for example in mathematics. Teachers plan lessons effectively and pupils are well informed about their personal targets and the progress they are making.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The curriculum and the range of other activities available to pupils are outstanding. The school has arranged its curriculum so that pupils complete Key Stage 3 programmes of study in two years rather than three. Additional time is provided in Year 7 for English and mathematics, with lessons in these subjects each day. In Year 9, pupils embark on what is seen as a 13 to 19 progression through education and training, with a wide variety of different courses and routes available to meet individual needs. Increasingly, pupils take examinations when it is appropriate for them to do so, rather than at the conventional times. The school's Business and Enterprise specialism has had a major influence on the curriculum. The school has a deeply held belief in equipping its pupils for life, both in terms of the courses available and through the skills and the positive attitudes required to succeed. This starts now in Year 7 with the Building Learning Power course, and older pupils follow at least one vocational course of some description. The range available to them, including many BTEC and NVQ courses, is exceptional. Partnerships with training providers enhance some courses. In addition, the school runs Enterprise Weeks and Young Enterprise clubs.

All tutor groups in Year 7 participate in an outdoor pursuits residential trip. There are many other visits and residential opportunities for older pupils. Time in school is used imaginatively. For example, whole mornings may be devoted to particular aspects of personal, social and health education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Heath Park is an exceptionally inclusive school. For many years there has been a policy of never permanently excluding a pupil, and even shorter-term exclusions are extremely low in number. Support and guidance for pupils who have behaviour or learning difficulties are provided by unusually large teams of staff. Specialist help is available for refugees, asylum-seekers and any who need to develop their English speaking skills. There are well developed collaborative arrangements with other services and agencies to support pupils. A 'pastoral board' that includes representatives from mental health agencies, Connexions, the school nurse and others, meets regularly to monitor the progress and well-being of vulnerable individuals. Advice and guidance on progression routes through 13 to 19 education and training are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The leadership of the school is outstanding. There is an extremely clear sense of direction and purpose. There are two aspects to this. The first is the school's vision statement that puts the needs of pupils at the heart of everything; the headteacher inspires staff by being a daily embodiment of this philosophy. The second is the commitment to equip pupils to succeed in life, despite the disadvantaged backgrounds from which many come. This commitment, enhanced by the school's specialist status as a Business and Enterprise College, results in a highly innovative curriculum that motivates pupils and allows them to succeed.

The headteacher is supported by a strong senior leadership team. Long-term planning is good. There is a rigorous approach to monitoring and reviewing the outcomes of different areas of work. Since the last inspection, the school has become very good at using data, on pupil progress in particular, to support its review processes. There is good leadership at middle management levels. Heads of department, called Leaders of Learning, have considerable autonomy which they use well, and the new system of departmental self-review will improve self-evaluation at this level. Good systems are in place for monitoring and seeking to improve the quality of teaching. This is good at the moment but could improve further. Senior managers need to develop ways of evaluating this leadership and be more effective in ensuring that processes are carried out.

The morale of the staff is exceptionally good. They benefit from careful and supportive induction, good professional development opportunities and a positive culture of observing each other and sharing good practice. The school is well supported by an efficient and effective governing body. Governors are well informed, and challenge the school appropriately. The school's financial management is excellent and it offers very good value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
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	2
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	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
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	3
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	2

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.

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	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection.

Heath Park is an outstanding school. It was a pleasure and a privilege for me to come to the school, including meeting some of you. You show great pride in the school, and rightly so. You have an excellent headteacher. You also have a very committed and enthusiastic staff, who believe in the school to a very unusual degree. There is exceptional care and support available to every pupil, whatever their circumstances or needs. As a business and enterprise college, the curriculum of the school is highly unusual and serves your interests very well, allowing you start on courses that you will find more interesting earlier than in most schools. The range of courses and qualifications and all the other interesting opportunities you have outside the classroom are also very good. You have responded to this; large numbers of you are making an excellent contribution to the life of the school and the local community. Your academic progress is good, you develop very well as individual people, and you are succeeding in many different ways. The majority of those parents that responded to the questionnaire used as part of the inspection were supportive of the school.

There are some ways in which the school could improve further. The quality of teaching is good but could improve further. Links with parents could develop more. The school has introduced some new systems for departments to review and plan their developments and the school needs to ensure that these are effective. I am sure that the staff at the school will be able to meet these challenges.

I wish you all well for the future.