



Shelley College, A Specialist Centre For Science

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107771
Local Authority Kirklees
Inspection number 287911
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Huddersfield Road
School category	Community		Shelley, Huddersfield
Age range of pupils	13–18		West Yorkshire HD8 8NL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01484 868777
Number on roll (school)	1110	Fax number	01484 222945
Number on roll (6th form)	341	Chair	Mrs Linda Dye
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mr John Fowler
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
13–18	20–21 September 2006	287911

© 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 two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Shelley College is a larger than average mixed comprehensive school for students aged 13 to 18. The sixth form is also larger than average with around 341 students on roll. Most students arrive with higher than average levels of attainment. The majority of students are White British with the largest minority ethnic group being of Asian origin, at around 5%. Very few have English as a second language. A very low proportion of students are eligible for free school meals, although a higher than average number of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school acquired specialist college status for science in September 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shelley College is a good and improving school. Aspects of the provision are outstanding. Most students achieve well. Standards in the main school are above average and broadly average in the sixth form. Some students make very good progress and for a number of individuals in the sixth form, achievement is exceptional. In a minority of subjects, particularly at AS level, some students do not achieve as well as they should. Underperformance in mathematics in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 has been accurately recognised and analysed by the school, and appropriate action has been taken. The progress of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable students is monitored effectively and they achieve as well as their peers. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school has worked successfully on promoting positive behaviour. Inspectors were impressed with how well students conducted themselves both in lessons and around the school. Students feel safe. Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted and students show a very good awareness of these. Most enjoy being at school and levels of attendance are good.

Teaching and learning are good and in some cases excellent. A feature of most lessons is that teachers build very good relationships with their students. There is, however, too much variability in the quality of teaching in some subjects and this is one of the key challenges for the school. The curriculum in the main school and sixth form is outstanding, providing choice within an excellent range of academic and accredited vocational programmes. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is also a strength, and very effectively enables students to make a positive contribution, such as involvement in local community dry-stone walling projects. The quality of care, guidance and support is good in the sixth form. In the main school, this provision is outstanding. The majority of parents view the work of the school very positively, although a small minority feel the views of the students, particularly in the sixth form, are not always considered fully.

Shelley College has a very strong senior leadership team that provides clear vision and direction for the school's development. Financial management is good and the school provides good value for money. Since the last inspection, senior managers have successfully brought about a number of key improvements including greater accountability for middle managers and governors, and better use of data to monitor the progress of individual students. Standards of attainment have been rising consistently for several years. The school has gained specialist college status for science. This is beginning to have a positive impact on the curriculum through the development of online courses in science and English. A very diverse range of external partnerships has been developed to enrich students' experiences further. Through its self-evaluation, the school correctly identified the need to improve the leadership of some subjects. However, some aspects of monitoring and evaluation are not yet sufficiently robust to measure progress against the school's priorities. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and broadly accurate overall, although overgenerous in two judgements made on the sixth form and too conservative in its evaluation of the curriculum. Most

of the areas for improvement raised at the last inspection have been tackled effectively. The school clearly demonstrates a good capacity to improve its provision further.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Post-16 provision is good. Standards are broadly average with students achieving well in response to the good teaching they receive and some make outstanding progress. Students are given good academic and pastoral guidance before joining the sixth form, during their time there and before leaving to pursue further studies or the world of work. Almost all students complete their courses successfully. Individual targets are used very well to help students maintain their progress and to inform them what they need to do to improve further. Overall, the curriculum is outstanding and enriched by a wide range of activities in sport, the arts, music and voluntary activities. These contribute to the judgement that provision for students' personal development is excellent. Leadership and management are good and ensure good value for money. Students are very enthusiastic when they describe their life in the sixth form.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise levels of achievement in a minority of subjects, particularly mathematics from Year 10.
- Ensure a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across subjects.
- Improve aspects of monitoring and evaluation to measure progress towards the school's targets more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

In the main school, standards are above average and students achieve well. Students enter the school with above average standards. They make very good progress in Year 9 when they achieve very well in science and their performance in mathematics is exceptionally high. In Years 10 and 11, most students make at least the progress expected of them, although the rate of progress is slower than in Year 9. Students' performance in English improved significantly in 2005. Although better than in 2004, students did not make their expected progress in mathematics for the second year running. The school has identified the reasons for this underperformance and taken action to address this for the next academic year. In Year 10, students' results in mathematics show signs of improvement, although it is too early to gauge the full impact of all the strategies applied. Results at GCSE are very good, with the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades above average and showing a rising trend. Since the school gained specialist status, more students have achieved A* or A grades in science.

In the sixth form, students attain broadly average standards and achieve well in relation to their starting points. For some students, achievements have been outstanding.

Retention rates are very high. The school accurately recognises in its self-evaluation that some students are not achieving as well as they should in a minority of subjects, particularly at GCSE and AS level. Targeted plans for improvement are in place for 2006/07. Across all ages, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and other groups of students, achieve as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school has a very strong caring ethos and an outstanding sense of community, where everyone is valued. Students are proud and supportive of their school. They respond well to the wide range of opportunities provided. Many work on behalf of others and make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. Students, particularly in the sixth form, volunteer for a variety of positions, such as peer mentors, for which they receive careful training. The school has worked hard to establish a culture of positive behaviour. This has been successful and behaviour is often exemplary, creating an outstanding learning environment in which students feel safe and happy. This is a strong factor in the school's rising standards. Overall, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this is demonstrated by the positive way they work and socialise with each other. Many students take part in the wide range of out-of-school sporting activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and students generally achieve well. Some teaching is outstanding. Teaching and learning have improved as a result of good professional development. Good practice, however, is not always shared effectively. Lessons are generally well planned, with a variety of activities to engage and sustain students' interest. The provision of information and communication technology (ICT) has been greatly improved. It is used to particularly good effect in some areas such as science, but a number of departments are not using it creatively to engage students. Relationships in the school are good. The pace and level of work in many lessons provide good challenge. In some satisfactory lessons, students are not given sufficient scope to work independently and the teacher's input is over-lengthy. Good progress has been made recently in developing assessment approaches to aid students' learning but these are not yet fully, or consistently, in place. Marking systems are being developed to give students clear guidance on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Students are able to choose from a wide range of options in Year 10 and their preferences are invariably met. There is excellent curricular provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some students' needs are met through personalised programmes that include some GCSE courses and extended work placements. Vocational courses match some students' needs closely. The options on offer, for example the Acquiring Numerous Skills and Opportunities Naturally (ANSON) course, and work-related opportunities in general, are excellent. Provision for the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good and a growing strength. There is a very good range of clubs and enrichment activities and students benefit greatly, for example from participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Students express enthusiasm for these, but the school does not have robust arrangements for monitoring involvement in clubs to establish the impact on students' achievement and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall, the quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. It is good in the sixth form where improved procedures have been implemented recently to pick up underperformance early and provide the support needed. Individual targets for each student are being used effectively to raise expectations for the majority. Tutors regularly review students' progress towards meeting their targets. Students are confident that they can approach teachers and others when they want help. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive outstanding support. Students' individual needs are regularly assessed and effective support is provided. The school has very good links with external agencies to ensure that the right kind of help is provided when necessary. Surveys show that most parents are well informed and that this is continuing to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management are good. The outstanding leadership and drive of the headteacher, coupled with that of the senior leadership team, are key factors in driving the school forward. Through monitoring activities such as departmental review, the team has identified effective practice as well as those areas that need to be sharpened. The school's self-evaluation is for the most part accurate. The leadership and management of the work of separate departments are improving, but are variable.

Not all information is used effectively to ensure enough consistency in the school's provision, for example in the quality of teaching and learning. Governors offer a good level of support and challenge. They use the school's development plan as a framework for keeping an eye on what the school is doing. Whilst the targets in this plan help to ensure improvement, some are not precise enough to aid detailed evaluation. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies, including the local authority, schools and colleges, the local community and commercial enterprises have a positive impact on students' achievements, their personal development and future economic well-being. The school works hard to help all students to achieve well. Procedures for ensuring students are kept safe meet current government requirements.

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?	2	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	2	2
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	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	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	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
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	2	

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	1
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?	2	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	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

We wanted to thank you for making the Ofsted inspection team so welcome at your school last week. From the moment of our arrival on Wednesday morning, we were impressed by your courtesy, confidence and behaviour. This letter is intended to inform you of the main things we found while in your school over the two days.

We found Shelley College to be a good and improving school. You achieve well in your subjects and some of you achieve to a very high level. The specialist status that the school has gained for science has provided your school with very good ICT equipment and is supporting your good progress in science in Years 9, 10 and 11 well. We agreed with many of you that teaching in your school is good. Your school offers an excellent range of courses and other out-of-lesson activities and provides very effective support to help you through your study.

Inspectors noted three areas for the school to improve further. These were: to make sure that all of your lessons are of a high quality and consistently stretch your ability; to monitor some areas of the school's work more closely so teachers can more easily help you reach your potential; and to raise your achievement in a few subjects, particularly mathematics in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13. You too can help in this, by continuing to work as hard as you can in lessons and taking the opportunities provided by the school to tell them what is working well and less well.

Your school has an excellent headteacher and senior management team who work hard to improve your experience at school and are proud of your achievements.

Thank you again for your help in this inspection and we wish you every success for the future.