



Challney High School for Boys and Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109681
Local Authority LUTON
Inspection number 288473
Inspection dates 24–25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mark Sims HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Stoneygate Road
School category	Community		Luton
Age range of pupils	11–16		Bedfordshire LU4 9TJ
Gender of pupils	Boys	Telephone number	01582 599921
Number on roll (school)	803	Fax number	01582 586069
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr D Wilkinson
		Headteacher	Mr V Galyer
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–16	24–25 January 2007	288473

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Challney High is a small school near the centre of Luton. Most of its students are drawn from outside its catchment area of Challney. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high, as is the proportion of minority ethnic pupils. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than that found nationally.

Attainment on entry is well below the national average with a large number of pupils joining the school after Year 7. Challney High has recently been designated a specialist science and mathematics college. It is a training school and has Leading Edge status from the Department for Education and Science.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The ethos of the school is centred on achievement and the quality of students' learning experiences. There are high expectations for all students and the staff will not accept social deprivation or English as an additional language as excuses for underachievement. The approach is one of consistently challenging its students to do well.

Students make remarkable progress during their time at Challney Boys. They join the school working at levels well below the national average and yet, in the most recent test results at Key Stage 4, they left school above the national average. This achievement is even more significant when set against the performance of boys nationally.

The personal development of the boys is equally outstanding. Their behaviour and attitudes improve during the school experience, so that in Year 11 pupils of all levels and abilities want to do their very best and are highly motivated to learn. Bullying and racism in the school are rare. One student said:

'We're like a family of brothers'.

The high emphasis placed on teaching and learning results in a very high quality of provision throughout the school where provision is rarely less than good. The Chiltern Training Group (CTG) has played a significant part in the training of many of the school's own teachers.

The school regards all pupils as individuals and consequently the rich curriculum provides a variety of pathways and routes to suit their needs and interests. This is backed up by the extensive extra-curricular provision at lunchtime, after school and evenings when the parents can get involved in learning.

The care, guidance and support for students' pastoral and academic needs are exemplary. The school can rightly be proud that through its hard work and commitment to the care of individuals no student has been permanently excluded for 12 years. The support and monitoring of students' work through the school's sophisticated tracker system ensure that no student slips through the net and all receive appropriate intervention and support as required. Support for vulnerable groups of pupils ensures that they too fully benefit from the successes of the school.

None of the above could be achieved without inspirational leadership and, through the drive and vision of the headteacher, all senior leaders are empowered to lead effectively and establish the very special ethos that exists in the school. The governing body too plays its full part in its role of governing the school.

Challney High was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection. Rather than sit back and relax, it has gone from strength to strength to make significant improvements and has the capacity to go on and improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no improvement issues for the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding. Students enter the school in Year 7 well below the national average. Their levels of literacy are particularly low. During their time at Challney they make very rapid progress so that by the time they leave at the end of Year 11 they have reached standards above the national average. Standards are especially high when compared to the performance of boys nationally.

By the end of Key Stage 3 students are closing the gap and have reached standards below, but close to, the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining the highest possible levels in English, mathematics and science is rising as is the percentage of students achieving five or more GCSEs at A* to C including in English and mathematics. Progress has been more significant in English than mathematics over recent years but mathematics is now catching up following changes to the leadership of the department.

All groups of learners progress very well in an environment of support and challenge in the classroom. Higher attaining students are given extended work whilst those with learning difficulties and disabilities have appropriate intervention and support. In conversations with inspectors, students rated the contribution of the staff as the biggest single factor in raising their achievement.

Through a rigorous system of tracking the progress of individuals and subject departments the school knows which students are making insufficient progress and which subject areas are most successful. The school takes immediate action to address areas of concern.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They behave very well and enjoy their education greatly. They feel safe and secure and are confident that any occasional incidents of bullying or racism will be dealt with very effectively.

Attendance is good and students generally arrive at lessons punctually, with an eager attitude, ready to learn. They behave very well and relationships are excellent. Students are well aware of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles, and they participate well in the range of sports on offer. They enjoy the improving range of healthy eating options provided in the canteen.

Students appreciate responsibilities they are given, such as serving on the school council and acting as prefects. Year 10 boys mentor younger students and some in Year 8 act as 'buddies'. They develop a very good awareness of the world of work through the well delivered work experience programme in Year 11 and by the courses tailored to suit individual needs in Years 10 and 11.

The social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of students is outstanding. They take great pride in themselves and their school. Opportunities to exercise responsibility and to develop their leadership skills are very good. Boys work co-operatively in groups and show great respect for each other's feelings and for different faiths. They have a very good sense of right and wrong and know and appreciate the school's code of conduct. The many trips abroad provide students with practical experience of how others live and work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. The vast majority of teaching is at least good with very little less than that. There is an excellent learning culture, underpinned by strong mature relationships between students and teachers. Students have very good attitudes and are eager to learn.

Teachers use their very good subject knowledge and expertise to challenge students to learn rapidly and make excellent progress. They plan a range of stimulating tasks and activities that encourage students to be actively involved in lessons. Teachers use resources creatively, including interactive whiteboards, which help students to understand difficult ideas and concepts very well. Teachers use the wide range of data very well to identify students who are underachieving and to target individuals' learning needs. The high quality of learning in most lessons is supported by regular marking, with constructive comments enabling the students to know how to improve their work, and by regular monitoring of students' progress towards their target grades. Teachers help students to prepare for tests and examinations very well. Teaching assistants give very good support to students with learning difficulties, as well as to those at an early stage of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school thinks that its curriculum is outstanding, and the inspectors agree. The curriculum matches all pupils' interests, needs and ambitions. This is because it provides learning opportunities that take pupils from their starting point when they enter the school and engage them with a breadth of relevant and interesting courses.

The learning pathway that each student is provided with, and the wide range of academic and vocational choices at Key Stage 4, enable every student to access a course well matched to their needs and capabilities. The school focuses on empowering children to learn, particularly those for whom English is an additional language.

Extra-curricular provision is particularly strong and the schools' community education is a feature of excellence. Pupils can focus on improving their knowledge after school with a range of courses, particularly in English. Parents and their sons can come in the evening to study together and share their learning experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care provided by the school is outstanding. Vulnerable students are monitored very carefully and there is excellent liaison with outside agencies.

The very successful, integrated system of care ensures that there is excellent communication within the school. Parents are fully involved and they receive regular high quality information about their sons' progress. All this means that students are very well known, monitored and supported both pastorally and academically. Any areas of concern are identified quickly and dealt with very effectively. The school is involved in an innovative national project to raise the achievement of students from particular minority ethnic backgrounds, and this is contributing very effectively to higher standards and achievement.

Students know their targets and how they can improve the standard of their work. High quality focused support is given in a range of settings to assist students in raising their expectations and achievement. The very good careers programme gives advice to students on opportunities when leaving school and raises aspirations for further and higher education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. Under the headteacher's wise and effective leadership, action and responsibility have been devolved to all management and staff, and in particular the senior management team. His aim of providing a friendly, purposeful community is translated into outstanding practice. The sense of common purpose and unity is clear to see. It is the relentless push for improvement that has made the school outstanding. The school has training school status with Chiltern Training Group of which the school was the founder member. This status has been an important tool to help the school reflect on its practice for its own further development and to share with others. The governing body is supportive and challenging to the school and helps set out plans and finance for the school's continuing high quality development.

All new developments are strategically planned, have members of staff who are given responsibility for them to complete and are rigorously evaluated. Individually and collectively these plans when carried out assure the school's success.

The school has recently gained specialist science and mathematics status and this has enriched the curriculum further with a wider range of resources. The linked primary and secondary schools share the developing good practice very effectively. The 'e-learning project' that is run in Luton is very actively supported by the school, which shares in its central resources. Pupils are able to use equipment which is at the forefront of technology. Both these developments are extremely creatively and effectively managed.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

25 January 2007

Dear Students

Challney High School for Boys and Community College, Stoneygate Road, Luton Bedfordshire, LU4 9TJ

You will know that we recently visited your school for its inspection and we thought you would like to know the outcome of that visit.

I told your headteacher that it was a privilege to visit such an outstanding school. You can be rightly proud of Challney Boys and the part you have played in making it such a successful school. The progress you make in the school is remarkable. You face many challenges when you first come to the school but, thanks to the dedication of your teachers and your desire to do well, many of you are very successful in your examinations.

Those who lead you have made sure all the right procedures are in place - the high quality of the teaching, the support you receive, the close monitoring of your progress, an exciting curriculum; but above all, it is your leaders' approach to the school which challenges you to do as well as you can.

You respond magnificently to the challenge by the way you behave in lessons, get on so well with each other and have such a positive attitude to your learning. You have proved that it is 'cool to learn'.

I would like to thank you also for taking time to speak to members of the team and telling us why you so enjoy school. You confirmed it is a safe environment where bullying and racism is rare and where the staff, as one of you said, 'go the extra mile' to help and support you in every way possible.

Thank you again and may I take this opportunity to wish you every success in your future.

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector