



Twynham School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113873
Local Authority Dorset
Inspection number 289752
Inspection date 19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Alex Falconer HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Sopers Lane
School category	Community		Christchurch
Age range of pupils	8-18		BH23 1JF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01202 486237
Number on roll (school)	1230	Fax number	01202 486230
Number on roll (6th form)	270		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Paula Hunt
		Headteacher	Terry Fish
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2001		

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Twynham is a large 11–18 comprehensive school. The vast majority of the students are of White British heritage; the remainder are of Asian and mixed race heritage. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. The school has specialist technology college status has recently been invited to apply for a second specialism. In addition, Twynham is the lead school in the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset East initial teacher training scheme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Twynham School provides outstanding education for its students. The views of students, parents and others involved with the school are actively sought. The vast majority of the parents commented very positively in response to the questionnaire, for example, 'We are extremely impressed with all aspects of the school and our son is making excellent progress.' The school has a happy, welcoming atmosphere and the students feel safe and work conscientiously. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been broadened to provide more vocational options and the use of data further developed to provide more effective support and guidance.

Standards are high and students' achievement is outstanding. The school's results have been well above the national averages in Year 9 and Year 11 for the past four years. Progress, overall, is also very good and groups such as the gifted and talented or those with learning difficulties and disabilities also make very good progress across the key stages. Standards are also very good in the sixth form where pass rates at GCE A level are high and the majority of the students' progress to higher education or training. Students are well served by the technology focus of the school and can now access the school's network from home.

The personal development and well-being of students are outstanding. Students appreciate the positive atmosphere and the support they receive. They enjoy their studies and make a real contribution to the school and local community. Students behave very well and enjoy relaxing together socially at lunchtime or attending clubs. They feel safe and well looked after in the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is noticeably strong.

Teaching and learning are good across the school. Lessons are well planned and the teachers are experienced and confident. They manage learning well and use ICT effectively to help students understand and make progress. Overall, students respond well and make good progress. However, teachers and managers are aware that, in an outstanding school, they need to improve the proportion of lessons that are judged to be outstanding.

The curriculum provides a very wide range of opportunities for students. The curriculum is broad and balanced in Years 7 to 9. Recent developments have substantially increased opportunities for students in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. In particular, more vocational courses have been developed in addition to the range of technology options that the school's specialist status provides. The personal, social and health education programme across the school and work experience in Year 10 ensure that students are very well prepared for their future economic well being.

Care, guidance and support given to students are outstanding. The recently developed student support service works with a very wide range of other professionals and ensures that high quality support is given to all students. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities and vulnerable students are very well supported and cared for. Parents and guardians receive regular reports on the progress of their children and academic guidance is exceptionally strong.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and senior managers provide excellent leadership and are dedicated to raising standards. Expectations are high and the students respond by working hard and achieving very well. A welcoming and happy atmosphere is evident throughout the school. Governors are well informed and work effectively with managers. The school makes good use of its accommodation; however, the changing facilities for physical education continue to be inadequate. The school is well run and has a calm and tolerant atmosphere. Twynham School is popular with the local community and deserves its good reputation.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The sixth form, which is run in collaboration with two local secondary schools, is outstanding. It provides a very good and supportive atmosphere environment in which young people can study and mature. GCE A level pass rates are very good and improved to 98% in 2006. Students in the sixth form make progress broadly at or above the level predicted by their earlier attainment. Nearly 90% of Year 11 students go on to the sixth form or to further training each year and around 75% of the sixth formers went on to higher education in 2006.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of the accommodation, in particular, the changing facilities for physical education.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Standards are well above average and achievement is outstanding. Students come to the school in Year 7 with average attainment and positive attitudes to learning. By the end of Year 9, they attain significantly above average standards and make very good progress. In Year 9, students consistently attain high standards in English and standards in mathematics and science in 2006 improved markedly. The GCSE and A-level results are above the national averages. The proportion of students achieving five high grade passes at GCSE, including mathematics and English, has been above the national average for the past three years. Students make very good progress in Years 10 and 11. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make very good progress across the school. In the sixth form, the GCE A level pass rates improved to 98% in 2006. The school's focus on detailed tracking and specifically targeted support is paying dividends and the current standard of students' work is well above average. In addition, students achieve successes in a wide variety of extra-curricular sporting and cultural activities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The personal development and well-being of students are outstanding. Students feel safe and view the school's positive atmosphere and the support they receive as the main reasons why they enjoy school. They in turn make a real contribution to their school, for example, as student mentors, and in doing so increase their own confidence and self-esteem. Students behave very well, both in lessons and around the school, so that lessons are focused on achievement for all. The positive environment is reflected in high attendance and low levels of unauthorised absence. At lunchtime and after school, the students actively participate in sport and recreational activities. They appreciate the way their views are taken into account through the school council and how the school organises extra-curricular activities to suit the changing interests of different groups. Many now choose healthy eating options from the school canteen. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, too, is outstanding and students benefit from a wide range of visits, both socially and those forming an integral part of the curriculum.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching is judged to be good by the school and the inspection evidence supports this assessment. Lessons are well planned and teachers are confident in their knowledge and their ability to create a happy working atmosphere. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to help students understand and make progress with their studies. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers encourage students to take part in lessons. One student commented: 'The teachers are really helpful and make you want to participate.' However, the proportion of outstanding lessons is not as high as might be expected in an outstanding school. Sometimes, teachers talk for too long and the students are passive, and whole-class teaching approaches do not always meet the full range of learning needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum has been recently revised and now provides a very broad range of opportunities which meet the needs of students and provide access to relevant national qualifications. The school collaborates well with other local schools and colleges to provide a range of vocational programmes and opportunities for work-related learning.

A wide range of advanced level and vocational courses is available in collaborative sixth form arrangements with two other nearby schools. The personal development and work experience programmes ensure that students are very well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support given to students contributes strongly to their achievement and personal development. The student support service works in an integrated manner with a very wide range of other professionals to ensure that each and every young person is given the support needed. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and vulnerable students are very well supported and cared for. '... The school has been brilliant at identifying children's needs and addressing them quickly,' was a comment made by the parents of a student with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are rigorous systems in place to track and monitor students' progress. This is a key strength of the school. Academic guidance is also exceptionally strong and parents are involved at every stage. Students falling behind are identified quickly and a range of strategies, including individual mentoring and revision or extra classes, is used to enable them to catch up.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school is very well led by the senior management team and middle managers. The headteacher provides clear vision dedicated to raising standards and focused on improvements. Staff are carefully recruited and teachers are well qualified and experienced. As a result, students make very good progress in their studies. The capacity to improve continues to be very strong and the drive to improve standards is relentless. Managers are particularly effective in monitoring and analysing data which leads to a high standard of self-evaluation. Recent variations in the Year 9 test results and GCSE pass rates were clearly identified and sensible action plans put in place. As a result, test scores improved markedly in 2006 and the school was able to demonstrate that progress in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form was very good, given the earlier attainment of the groups involved.

The school has very good links with local schools and with further education colleges and employers. Arrangements for work experience, community involvement and extra-curricular activities are very good. Students take part with enthusiasm and demonstrate commendable commitment to healthy lifestyles. The governors support the school very well and are fully informed of developments and progress. Statutory requirements are fully met and child protection arrangements are up to date and well documented. Very good partnerships with the community continue to develop through

links with, for example, local primary schools, further education colleges, the collaborative sixth form arrangements and the local teacher training initiative in which the school takes the lead. The school makes good use of its accommodation and site. There are a large number of temporary classrooms in use, the sports facilities are too small and the changing facilities for both boys and girls are inadequate. This weakness was identified in the last inspection report and has still not been addressed.

Managers, teachers and support staff work hard to promote equality of opportunity and to combat discrimination. The result is a very well run school with a calm and tolerant atmosphere. There are highly effective systems in place for collecting information about performance across the school. The school improvement plan is clear and well structured. It is very effectively supported by a well established mechanism for reviewing progress toward targets. The school richly deserves its high local reputation.

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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	1
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	1	1
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?	1	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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	1
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 to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	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	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
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

- Following our inspection of your school on 19 October 2006, I write to tell you about our findings. I would like to thank you for the part you played in the inspection. Twynham is an outstanding school. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in March 2001. For instance, some buildings have been renovated, more vocational courses added to the curriculum and the school is now involved in training new teachers. Most of your parents commented very positively in response to our questionnaire. Your school has a safe, welcoming atmosphere and you work conscientiously at your studies. Since the last inspection, when the school was judged to be very good with some outstanding features, things have continued to improve. The curriculum has been broadened to provide more vocational options and support and guidance considerably developed. The school's examination and test results have been above the national averages for the past four years. Progress overall is very good and A*-C pass rates at GCSE continue to be above the national average. Standards are good in the sixth form where A level pass rates are high. Most sixth formers progress on to higher education or training each year. You also achieve successes in a wide variety of sporting and cultural activities. You told us that you appreciate the positive atmosphere in the school and the support you receive from the staff. Your personal development and well-being are outstanding. You clearly enjoy your studies and make a real contribution to the school and the local community. This is reflected in your attendance and in your good behaviour around the school. You are safe and well looked after. Teaching is good across the school. Lessons are well planned and the teachers are experienced and confident. They use ICT effectively to help you understand and to make progress. You also told us that you think highly of your teachers' knowledge and their approachability. You respond well in lessons and make good progress. The range of options in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form has recently increased. In particular, more vocational courses have been developed. The personal, social and health education programme, together with work experience in Year 10, ensure that you are very well prepared for your future. The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. Student support services work to make sure that high quality support is given to all. Those of you with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and cared for. The headteacher and senior managers provide excellent leadership to the school. Expectations are high and you respond by working hard and achieving very good standards. The school makes good use of its accommodation; however, the changing facilities for physical education continue to be inadequate. All staff work hard to promote equal opportunities and to combat discrimination. Your school is very well run and has a calm and tolerant atmosphere. Twynham school is popular with the local community and deserves its good reputation. We have asked the school to:
 - Improve the quality of the accommodation, in particular, the changing facilities for physical education.
 - Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching.