

Warblington School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116475
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290544
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey 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	738
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Keith Chessell
Headteacher	Ms Julie Rose
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	Southleigh Road Havant PO9 2RR
Telephone number	02392 475480
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Age group	11–16
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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

Warblington has specialist school status for science and mathematics and serves a community with a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. It is part of a wider federation of six local schools. Most students come from White British backgrounds with a few from minority ethnic groups. The number of students eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is also below the national average. The headteacher is on a two term secondment to a local school but was present for the inspection. During this secondment the deputy headteacher holds the position of acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where students can study in a harmonious and productive atmosphere. As a result, standards continue to rise because of the current strengths in the teaching and the curriculum. They are now close to national averages by the time students leave the school and the school acknowledges the need to raise them further. However, student's attendance at school and their punctuality are still areas of concern.

Teachers provide challenging, relevant and suitable work which meets the needs of all students. The wide range of teaching styles, well planned lessons and attention to ensuring learning is fun and enjoyable is why all students are now making good progress. The majority of lessons meet the needs of all students including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Students have established good relationships with the teaching staff and are enthusiastic learners who enjoy being at school and getting involved in their own learning. They have positive, mature attitudes to work. This is because teachers use their good subject knowledge confidently to provide an interesting and well planned curriculum which motivates students.

Leadership and management are firmly established and the headteacher has a clear vision for the school. Many good changes have been made to the running of the school and the good governing body is very involved in the strategic decision making of the school. There is a shared commitment to improve the school, by the leadership team, and they understand the priorities of the school. However, at this stage not enough focus is given to monitoring and evaluating the impact of decisions taken or the systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, particularly marking. The enthusiastic and committed members of staff have a strong sense of common purpose about what they want to achieve in the school. This positive view of the school is shared by parents and pupils. As one pupil said during the inspection 'they don't let you down here'.

Students are well cared for and know about how to be safe and healthy.

The links with charities and within the community are good. Key skills are taught well and information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively in many subjects. Students' skills in ICT are good. They are well prepared for future economic well being. The academic monitoring of learning and the progress students make is at an early stage of development and the impact of these systems has not yet been fully evaluated.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure there are consistently good standards across the school.
- Improve punctuality and attendance.
- Raise the quality of the teaching and learning to the level of the very best by more effective and consistent use of established monitoring procedures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter the school with standards that are broadly average. The standards reached by students in GCSE examinations are good in many subject areas and overall are close to the national average. The progress made by students both over time and in lessons is now good because of the strong support and good teaching.

In GCSE examinations last year the percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C continued the upward trend seen over the past few years and is now close to the national average. The percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades is above the national average and reflects the school's commitment to inclusion. Standards were high in art, humanities, physical education and textiles. In 2006 the percentage of students obtaining a level 5 or higher at Key Stage 3 in mathematics and science were close to the national average, but English was significantly below both the national average and those seen in previous years. The school is successfully working on raising these standards this year.

The school has set and agreed some ambitious targets for 2007. Their current detailed data from examinations, GCSE modular tests and teacher assessment clearly indicate that these are likely to be reached.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of students are good. The behaviour of students in lessons and around school is good with the vast majority acting in a sensible and mature fashion. The students' attitudes to their learning are positive and they share good relationships with each other and the staff. Students feel safe within the school and any bullying that occurs is dealt with quickly and effectively.

There is a very pleasant and welcoming atmosphere across the school. Students in discussions say they enjoy most activities and are enthusiastic about their education. There is an effective personal, social and health education programme that is well coordinated with a wide range of subjects and assemblies. This ensures that the students are making a positive contribution to the ethos of the school as a direct result of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The school is aware of the lower than average attendance of Year 11 students. They have appointed an attendance officer and introduced a range of strategies to improve the situation. The attendance, as a result, is improving and is now close to the national average although some lateness is still an issue. The introduction of a more vocational based, personalised curriculum for some students has been particularly successful and is to be extended.

The school has effectively promoted and encouraged students to adopt a healthy lifestyle through a wide range of subjects and initiatives. Students are well prepared for future careers or education using the well-established links with connexions and local colleges. There are many examples of students taking on responsibilities within their school and the local community, including an active school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Subject knowledge is good across the school and teachers use this to structure lessons to meet the needs of all students. Lesson planning by teachers is generally good, and timekeeping of tasks is closely monitored in the majority of lessons. However, in English, teachers do not always stick to the time plan well enough and as a result pace slows and progress is only satisfactory in some lessons. Relationships are good between

staff and students and there is a high level of mutual respect. As a result, students are attentive in lessons and listen well.

Teachers use assessment information about students to ask pertinent questions during lessons ensuring that the majority have understood what they have been asked to do. Teachers are good at ensuring that different abilities get appropriately well matched work. As a result work is challenging and enables students to make good progress. There is a good focus on what students need to know to achieve their next target.

Many lessons have practical hands on activities; teachers make excellent use of computers, interactive whiteboards and other resources to engage and motivate students into good learners. This is having a positive impact on raising standards. Marking of students' work is variable across subjects and year groups. At its best it supports students and indicates how they can improve. In a few subjects it is simply an acknowledgement that the teacher has looked at the work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has fulfilled its ambition to have 'an evolving curriculum that fully meets the needs of our students'. There are very strong features in the range of vocational courses and, because of the federation and college links, a wide range of subjects is available to students in Years 10 and 11. Students can benefit from a range of extra opportunities, for example by taking accelerated Key Stage 3 humanities courses or choosing from a range of higher-level courses at a local college in Year 11.

The development of the 14 -19 curriculum is very well managed through careers education, vocational courses, high quality college links and work experience. Extra challenge and opportunity is provided for students of the very highest ability and for those who are gifted and talented. Provision for citizenship and personal and social education is good and all students take a GCSE in religious education. A number of new initiatives, including the accelerated reading programme, have been successfully introduced, although the outcomes have yet to be fully evaluated.

The school's specialist status is promoting valuable cross-curricular development. The range and participation of extracurricular activities, trips and visits is very good. Specific days are used for in depth focus on key issues. There are real strengths in the development, planning and evaluation of the curriculum. The range and quality of GCSE and college courses ensures that the school meets the individual needs of students and the community well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and guidance is well planned and monitored. All requirements for care, health and safety are met and management of this is clearly very effective. Monitoring procedures are thorough; health and safety routines and risk assessments are all fully in place and child protection procedures are clear. The pastoral system is very effective and there are good systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality, although attendance remains below the national average.

The very effective use of academic data ensures that academic guidance is good and students believe that they are very well advised. The quality of tutor and mentor support and close links

with outside agencies ensures a high quality of student welfare. Careers education and guidance is particularly strong and ensures that students are well prepared for the next stage of education or for the work place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and there are clear lines of accountability between the headteacher and the acting headteacher. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future development of the school and a collective style of leadership that involves all senior leaders in decision making. There is a strong sense of purpose and a strong focus on improvement and change. Priorities for future development are appropriate and the headteacher has introduced a range of initiatives, such as the academic mentoring procedures, that are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

The school improvement plan is comprehensive, detailed and clearly focused. Members of staff are enthusiastic, committed and well matched to subject areas with learning resources efficiently and effectively deployed to ensure good value for money. The learning environment is a positive one and the school has worked hard to improve accommodation. Systematic self-evaluation has been introduced across the school but there is insufficient emphasis on raising achievement and procedures for monitoring teaching are not always rigorous enough. Governors are well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and hold it to account for its performance. There is a commitment across the school to equality of opportunity. Improvements since the previous inspection, including the development of leadership roles, resources and the accommodation, indicate that the school has good capacity for future improvement.

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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?	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	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.

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	3
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
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

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school during our recent inspection visit. We have appreciated listening to your views about the school. We spoke to many of you in class, at break times and when meeting you for more formal discussion. Many of your parents have written to us or returned questionnaires and we have welcomed their comments. We would like to share the findings of the inspection.

Your headteacher and her senior staff are working hard to improve teaching and learning in the school. Standards although broadly average across the school, could still be better than this. Many of you are now making much better progress than you did in the past and that is because teaching has improved. We were impressed with your behaviour and commitment to work hard and how many of you clearly enjoy your time at the school and with each other and have a great pride in the school. It was disappointing however, that some of you are still too late arriving for school in the morning and that some of the older students are still absent from school on too many days.

We have asked your headteacher to improve:

- standards of work - so more of you gain higher qualifications in your tests and exam results
- attendance and make sure that more of you are attending school more frequently
- the quality of monitoring and evaluation of lessons by senior staff to ensure that more lessons are like the very best lessons being currently taught.

We wish you all the best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Kelsey

HMI