



Leysland High School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 120272
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291691
Inspection dates 12–13 September 2006
Reporting inspector Marion Thompson

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Winchester Road
School category	Community		Countesthorpe
Age range of pupils	11–14		Leicester LE8 5PR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2771841
Number on roll (school)	670	Fax number	0116 2783157
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Andrew Spencer
		Headteacher	Keith McDermott
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–14	12–13 September 2006	291691

Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 7 is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and none is at the early stages of learning English. Whilst the headteacher has been in post for some years, a new senior leadership team has been appointed since the previous inspection.

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 with many outstanding features. It has an impressive track record of pupils achieving well. It has maintained the numerous strengths identified in the previous inspection whilst continuing to improve. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported very well by the recently appointed senior leadership team, ensures that leaders at all levels are constantly seeking different ways to help pupils do even better. Planning for the future is based on excellent self-review, which takes cognisance of the views of the whole-school community, including parents. Team working and mutual support are very strong, and governors are knowledgeable and supportive. The school has excellent capacity to improve even further.

Standards across the board are above average and pupils achieve well. They attain particularly high standards in science and achievement in science is amongst the very best nationally. The good progress, in all subjects, is attributable in part to consistently good and occasionally outstanding teaching. As one parent said, 'Teachers foster an enthusiasm for learning and work with children's strengths and interests as well as helping them develop in weaker areas.' Teachers plan work meticulously, giving pupils stimulating, relevant and challenging tasks to do. Where good practice is identified, for example, in using assessment to improve learning in science, it is shared across the school and adopted by other departments. In this instance, it has already resulted in improving pupils' achievements in English.

More able boys make reasonable progress, but not as much as others. Occasionally they do not respond to challenging work as well as girls. The school has reacted quickly to this by introducing a range of strategies to help boys to respond more positively. At this stage it is too early to judge what the impact has been. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make rapid and sustained progress and parents particularly praise the good quality of the support they receive.

Pupils' success is also underpinned by their outstanding personal development. This is promoted by the excellent care, support and guidance provided by the energetic, knowledgeable and committed staff team. Staff and pupils know each other very well and their respect for each other permeates school life. As one pupil said, 'Teachers listen to you and respect your views, so you learn to respect others too.' Pupils are very happy at school, and attendance is above average. They relish their learning and have a strong understanding of safety in their lives and how to be healthy. They give their time freely to support the school and wider community, for example, doing sterling work in supporting charities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and helps them to develop into confident young people, well prepared by their academic and social skills, to move on to the next stage of their education.

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad enough to meet the needs of most pupils. Special programmes for vulnerable and disaffected pupils have been particularly successful in encouraging better attendance and boosting confidence and self-esteem. Requirements to safeguard pupils are rigorously applied.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of more able boys by motivating them to accept further challenge.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are consistently above average and pupils' achievement is good. Outstanding achievement in science has been maintained since the previous inspection. The rounded nature of pupils' success is shown by their good progress in the arts, sports and humanities. This sustained success is in part a result of well planned teaching and learning. Pupils reach challenging targets because their progress is carefully monitored and extra help provided when necessary. This is particularly effective in science. This excellent practice is now helping pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities, to achieve even better in mathematics and English. For example, in 2003, teachers recognised very early on that pupils' standards in writing were below average on entry to school, especially those of boys. A programme of support targeted at specific pupils ensured that results in writing were above average when these pupils took their national tests in 2006.

More able boys make satisfactory progress, although they achieve relatively less well than other groups. This is being tackled robustly across the curriculum, but as yet it is too early to assess the impact of action taken.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Parents recognize that by the time their children leave school they are confident individuals who have the personal and academic skills to prepare them well for the next stage of education and work. Pupils' palpable enjoyment of learning is evident in their above average attendance, lively engagement in lessons and the low level of exclusions. Most pupils behave very well and are fully aware of personal safety issues. Bullying is rare because of excellent anti-bullying work, which won the school a national award. Pupils take regular exercise and eat and drink healthily whilst at school. Their spiritual, social, cultural and moral development is outstanding and they respond to others with empathy and understanding. Residential trips help pupils to generate strong team-working and social skills. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community through activities such as performing in plays and raising money for charities. Pupils correctly attribute their excellent personal development to staff expertise and commitment, mutual respect and interesting teaching.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have extremely good subject knowledge and considerable expertise in teaching the 11–14 age range. They organise lessons effectively and generally match work to pupils' learning needs, so that they make good progress. Lessons are challenging and include a wide range of activities, although occasionally more able boys are reluctant to rise to the challenge despite their capabilities. The relevance of the teaching matter is made clear to pupils. For example, in a textiles lesson, the teacher stressed the importance of marketing and sales and this had a positive impact on how pupils prepared their own designs. Respect between teachers and pupils is a particular strength and provides a secure foundation for pupils to acquire confidence in their own abilities to learn.

Exceptional teaching, most evident in science, uses assessment information very effectively to fine tune targets for pupils so that they know the levels expected of them. This practice is being adopted by other subjects, and is having a positive impact.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good curriculum planning combined with well-targeted additional support are further key factors in most pupils achieving well. Many parents express appreciation for the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, which helps their children to make good progress. Specially designed out-of-school activities stimulate and challenge more able pupils. One parent commented that her child was 'actively stretched and challenged.' The school has established good links with its partner primary and secondary schools to promote continuity in learning. The wide range of well-attended extra-curricular opportunities, together with the well designed personal development programme, enhances pupils' confidence and self-reliance. Careers guidance prepares them for the future. Planning for work-related learning is at an early stage. Drama is taught through English but provision is uneven. Special programmes for vulnerable and disaffected pupils have resulted in more regular attendance and more positive attitudes to school for these pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The excellent pastoral system is a key component of pupils' good achievement and excellent personal development. Pupils are well known to form tutors, who remain with them each year, so problems are identified early and timely support is provided. One parent wrote that 'teachers are truly interested in pupils, and thoroughly understand my own child.' There are permanent heads of Years 7 to 9, who do not move up with pupils. Young people benefit from their particular expertise, for example,

in settling pupils into Year 7 or preparing them for college in Year 9. Staff work very effectively with other agencies to ensure pupils' health, safety and well-being.

Pupils' progress is checked carefully through an efficient system of record keeping which quickly identifies underachievement. When necessary, pupils receive well considered and effective academic and/or pastoral support. They are provided with very clear guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with effective support that helps them to progress at a brisk pace.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The pupils' good achievement and excellent personal development are a result of excellent leadership and management. The headteacher, supported by a very skilful senior leadership team, constantly focuses the school community on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement further. The school's lucid and accurate evaluation of its work, especially departmental review, forms an excellent basis for planning and prioritisation. Full account is taken of the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors. The school tackles areas of relatively weaker performance quickly; for example, more-able boys are supported in improving their progress. Teamwork is highly prized amongst the staff, who work together very closely to share successful strategies. Teachers lead and manage their areas of responsibility very well.

Governors' knowledge of the school is outstanding. They set challenging targets for the headteacher and for themselves, and keep a close check on the school's work. Since the previous inspection the school has improved on many fronts such as assessment, teaching and learning. The new senior leadership team is already having an impact through sharper evaluation and planning. This illustrates the outstanding capacity to improve even more. Financial management makes best use of a limited budget and governors ensure that all arrangements for child protection and for ensuring the safety of pupils are fully met.

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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?	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	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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
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	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	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?	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	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	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

2 Thank you for the warm welcome you gave my colleagues and I when we visited your school. We appreciate your help and enjoyed hearing your opinions. I am writing to tell you our views of your school. We think this is a good school with a number of outstanding strengths. We feel that you are achieving well across the board, especially in science, where you do very well. A lot of credit for your success goes to the good teaching and hard work of your teachers and to your own positive attitudes and regular attendance. Teachers are very clear about how much progress you make and provide extra help when you need it. The more able boys are making satisfactory progress, but not quite as much as everyone else, so if you feel you are one of these pupils, get stuck in and try a bit harder!

Those of you who spoke to us told us you enjoyed your schoolwork and this was very evident in the lessons we saw. You also enjoy the popular extra activities the school provides. Lessons generally meet your needs well. By the time you leave school the excellent care, support and guidance the school provides help you to develop into confident young people, well prepared to make a success of the next stage of education.

Leaders and managers of the school plan improvements extremely carefully and effectively and we know your parents rate the school highly. Governors provide excellent support for the school. For these reasons we feel sure that the school will continue to be successful and improve even further.

- We have asked the school to concentrate on getting more-able boys to accept more challenge in their work.

With every best wish for the future,

Marion Thompson Lead inspector