

# Hinchley Wood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125316
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	293266
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ramesh Kapadia HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1088
6th form	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr A Fudge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Poole
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Claygate Lane Hinchley Wood Esher KT10 0AQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8398 7161
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8339 3908

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Hinchley Wood is a secondary school with over 1000 pupils, serving an affluent area of Surrey adjacent to London. Over four fifths of its pupils are white and about a sixth have learning difficulties and disabilities; a few speak English as an additional language, but none are at an early stage of speaking English, so there is no specific support for them. Its sixth form is relatively small.

Its central mission is to be a community of excellence which provides outstanding learning and personal development for all. The school became a specialist college for music in 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hinchley Wood School provides outstanding personal development for its students who attain consistently high standards in the main part of the school. Students' progress from Key Stage 2 is rapid during Key Stage 3 and good up to Key Stage 4, where there are secure signs of improvement. Progress is satisfactory in the sixth form.

The school's overall effectiveness is good, with some outstanding features. This is in line with and slightly better than the school's own self evaluation which is over-cautious in some aspects, though does identify appropriate areas for further development.

A very high percentage of students achieve five or more higher GCSE grades, including English and mathematics; the school's inclusive nature is shown by the fact that almost all students have achieved at least one graded result over the last few years. The quality of teaching and learning is good and supported by regular tracking and assessment of students. The curriculum is good and appropriately balanced, with good vocational provision in the main school, but not in the sixth form where the curriculum is satisfactory.

There is outstanding provision to promote health and economic well-being, underpinned by strengths in social and cultural development. Students enjoy school, behave well and feel safe. Care, support and guidance are outstanding and particularly so for vulnerable students. A thorough system to track progress has been introduced for all year groups. The school works very effectively with a wide range of partners, including the multi-professional team, which has led to positive outcomes with regards to attendance and exclusions. The school has taken a leading role in working with other secondary schools and colleges to offer more varied pathways at 14-19.

The changes since the previous inspection have addressed areas of weakness such as in accommodation and in some departments. This illustrates good capacity for further improvement from difficult circumstances six years ago: the school offers good value for money overall.

The cohesive and effective leadership and management team have set a very clear vision for the future to promote excellence throughout the school. All departments are involved in self review and this is being evaluated by governors. This has helped the school maintain high standards, underpinned by good teaching and strong pastoral support.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The small sixth form in the school has courses in GCE A and AS level; at present there are no vocational courses but there are ambitious plans to offer specialised diplomas within the local Elmbridge partnership, extending links already made. The curriculum is satisfactory as are teaching and learning and students' progress. The leadership of the sixth form, which changed recently, is satisfactory; joint monitoring of teaching with external consultants has been undertaken recently, with plans for improvements. A recent initiative in promoting independent learning with a course on critical thinking is supported by teaching in subject lessons. A strong feature is the care and support offered which results in good personal development for students who value the small and secure atmosphere of the sixth form centre. A recent external report noted that the sixth form is reasonably cost-effective.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Review its sixth form provision to improve students' progress.
- Enhance vocational provision for the 14-19 curriculum within the partnership with local schools and colleges.

## Achievement and standards

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Attainment is high and achievement is good. The school has analysed data carefully including the achievement of various groups and has set high targets for 2007; internal evidence indicates that the challenging targets set are likely to be achieved at GCSE but not in the sixth form.

External data shows very good progress in the core subjects of English and mathematics across both during Key Stage 3 and up to Key Stage 4, where there is good progress overall. The trend in results over the last few years has been upwards with slight fluctuations. Almost all groups of pupils make good progress in the school, as confirmed in the small sample of lessons observed.

At Key Stage 3 about nine-tenths of students attain Level 5 in the core subjects and three quarters attain Level 6 in mathematics. At GCSE over seven tenths of students attain five or more higher grades including English and mathematics; virtually all attain at least one graded result. The point scores at AS and A level are around the national average.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students enjoy and take pride in the school, building on the very good relations they develop with teachers and each other. Attendance has improved and is now above average; it has also improved in the sixth form, where punctuality of a few students to lessons is an issue.

By the time they leave the school, students have high self-esteem as well as strong personal skills. A wide range of initiatives are helping students to develop healthy lifestyles and they themselves have raised money specifically to provide a salad bar at lunchtime to promote the good diet served in the canteen. Many students walk or cycle to school; physical exercise is also promoted through a wide range of sporting activities, resulting in the award of Sportsmark.

Students express their feelings well and have a clear understanding about how to be safe in school and the community; they report that there is little if any bullying. A small number of parents expressed concerns about behaviour, but the inspection confirmed that the vast majority of students behave very well. The number of exclusions, which was quite high last year, has decreased.

Students take their responsibilities seriously, as is evident in their charitable fundraising work and contributions to the school and the wider community. Regular surveys are undertaken. The school council provides students with an effective voice which is taken seriously; for example, students are involved in interviews for new teachers.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students develop a clear sense of what is right and wrong and show a high degree of respect for others. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect about life. Cultural awareness is well developed through

a wide range of high quality extra-curricular opportunities, including many visits both within the United Kingdom and abroad in Europe and Japan. Students are very well prepared for life after school: a high proportion achieves Level 2 qualifications and almost all continue with education after Year 11.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good, with aspects which are outstanding. The school's internal monitoring indicates that over eight in ten lessons are good or better and none are inadequate. This was confirmed by the small sample of teaching observed in the main school. Lessons have well constructed plans and there is evidence that work is matched to differing students' needs. Relationships are good and students participate well in lessons. Several lessons included examples of peer and self assessment by students, with careful links made to target levels and what students would need to do to improve. Many lessons made good use of information technology. A few lessons included paired and group work, which enabled boys to participate actively and thoughtfully. The promotion of creativity is fostered by a novel curriculum approach in Year 7: one parent noted how her son in Year 7 had 'produced some very interesting and innovative work'.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The school has a good curriculum which provides a broad range of subjects and activities well matched to the needs and interests of its students. The curriculum offers students opportunities to make up to five option choices, in addition to the core subjects of English, mathematics and single science. In Years 10 and 11, it offers an increasing choice of vocational subjects in partnership with local colleges. Senior leaders have reviewed the curriculum over the past year and introduced successful initiatives, including an innovative pilot of 'Thinking Smart' in Year 7, which has been positively evaluated externally.

The curriculum is enriched well through an extensive variety of clubs and out-of-school learning which greatly benefit students. Some extra-curricular activities have arisen as a result of the school's specialist status in music.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding, with strengths in pastoral provision, particularly for vulnerable students who are valued and sensitively supported. Good support is also provided for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. One parent commented that for her daughter 'support has boosted her confidence - she is almost a different child now'. Effective links with local primary schools enable students to settle quickly into Year 7.

Students feel safe with appropriate arrangements for safeguarding them. There are also effective links with outside specialists and agencies. Procedures for supporting students who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour have been enhanced by the use of a part-time counsellor.

School leaders make very good use of data to track the progress of students in different year groups and subjects; this is also shared with parents. Learners receive clear guidance about their targets and are able to explain where they need to improve. Careers advice is effective and students are equipped to make informed choices about their future education and employment.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good with some outstanding features. The passionate headteacher, seen as 'the driving force' by one parent, sets very high expectations and is supported by a dedicated senior team, as well as other staff in the school. An outstanding feature is the clear vision shared by teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as governors. There is a drive and determination to improve, which is evident in the school's carefully formulated strategic plan.

Academic progress is outstanding during Key Stage 3, but not quite as fast subsequently. The excellent personal development of the students is a result of strong pastoral leadership at all levels and valuing every student. The opinions of parents and students are valued and frequently acted upon. Parents are also supportive, as evident in the positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires.

Governors take an active role in monitoring and evaluating aspects of the school. They are supportive but are also prepared to offer challenges and question changes such as on option choices; they take their role of linking to departments seriously. Although there is a large historical deficit, a plan has been agreed with the local authority to move towards a balanced situation over the next few years.

The school has made very imaginative use of its recently acquired specialist status in music which has added an extra dimension to students' education. It has enabled the school to enrich its curriculum, extend its community provision and develop closer links with local primary schools. Issues relating to the last inspection have been tackled successfully. There are robust systems in place to ensure efficient management on a day-to-day basis.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	2
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	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	3
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	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**

9 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Hinchley Wood School , Claygate Lane, Hinchley Wood, Esher, KT10 0AQ

Thanks very much for the welcome you gave us during our visit to your school. You also helped in showing us around and talked to us about your positive experiences; we found some outstanding features in your good school.

We found that standards in the school are high and that you make good progress as a result of good teaching, especially in English and mathematics. You make the most of the extensive range of opportunities in school which enables you all to develop very well as young people. We were particularly impressed with the approach to living in a healthy way and note that you have asked for an extra cycle shed to help save the environment; your views, as expressed in the school council, are taken seriously. The school offers outstanding care and support and you usually know your targets and how to reach them. The small sixth form offers a caring and supportive environment but we felt that some of you who stay on could work harder to make better progress.

The school is very well led and all the adults have a strong will for you to succeed and for the school to continue improving. We suggested two areas for improvement:

- the school should review and improve its sixth form provision
- the school should continue its work on vocational opportunities and pathways on offer to you at Key Stage 4 and beyond.

Yours faithfully

R Kapadia, HMI