



Henley in Arden High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125733
LEA Warwickshire
Inspection number 293349
Inspection dates 28 June 2006 to 29 June 2006
Reporting inspector Janet Thompson HMI

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

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)	School address	Stratford Road
School category	Community		Henley-in-Arden
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		B95 6AF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01564 792364
Number on roll	609	Fax number	01564 792411
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Crathorne
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2001	Headteacher	Mr J West

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	28 June 2006 - 29 June 2006	293349

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This small school serves a rural area including and surrounding Henley-in-Arden. Although there are three adjacent selective grammar schools, the intake is broadly comprehensive. Good transport links enable some pupils to travel from wards in Birmingham to attend the school. There is a very low proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. The school became a specialist college for the Performing Arts in September 2005.

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 which is well led and managed. The staff team work in successful partnership with parents and pupils to achieve the school aims, which are encapsulated in the school motto 'CARE' - consideration, achievement, responsibility and endeavour.

Through good teaching, the school helps pupils to achieve standards that are above the national average. Pupils make good progress and some pupils could make even better progress with more sophisticated and consistent use of assessment tracking data. Good achievement and good personal and social development helps to equip pupils for their future lives.

Self-evaluation is well planned and provides the school with a clear picture of its performance. The curriculum is only satisfactory but the school has clearly identified its shortcomings. The newly devised timetable has been designed to address issues around curriculum entitlement. Good partnership with other schools and colleges helps the school meet a wide range of learning needs, although there are not enough opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.

The school has limited resources but uses these well and provides good value for money. Although the speed of some improvements has been hampered by the impact of staffing difficulties, significant in a small school, there has been satisfactory and in some areas good improvement since the last inspection. Capacity to improve and become outstanding is good. Self-evaluation is effective, although a clear focus on pupils' learning during lesson observations would strengthen it. Detailed planning, which identifies priority areas for improvement, is in place for implementation in the new academic year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Track pupils' progress more carefully using assessment tracking data.
- Improve the breadth of opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.
- Ensure that pupil progress information from lesson observations is evaluated to identify where additional support needs to be put in place.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Standards when pupils start school at 11 are slightly above average and are significantly above average once they reach 14. Results are improving and reflect good progress overall, although there is variation across the core subjects.

GCSE results are above average and improving. The number of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at A*- C grades and A*- G grades are significantly above average. Standards in mathematics are good and pupils make above average progress by the time they are 16. The progress made in English at Key Stage 4, however, was

unsatisfactory in 2005. Inspection of English course work and progress in lessons demonstrates that achievement is improving for Year 10 pupils and is now satisfactory or better. The school has correctly identified that achievement in English needs to improve further and is reviewing its provision for the subject. From September, the new timetable will allocate more time for teaching English.

The progress of girls and boys across the years at the school is broadly similar. Progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good overall, although those who need support from within the school make better progress than those who require more extensive help.

Tracking of pupils' achievement is inconsistent between departments. In some departments, it is extremely good and helps teachers to target support and intervention effectively. There is some good departmental self-evaluation. Although results are analysed each year, whole-school monitoring and evaluation is insufficiently developed to evaluate progress over time and to identify potential underachievement quickly.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of the pupils is good. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school and this is demonstrated by their willingness to learn in lessons and their participation in additional performing arts and sports activities. Attendance is satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is low. Pupils are polite and demonstrate consideration for others. Responsible behaviour helps to keep pupils safe and they are well aware of how to deal with possible risks. The school's system for promoting good behaviour enables pupils to learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect, although a few pupils feel there is some inconsistency in approach. The school has identified concerns, also raised by a few parents, about behaviour in one year group and is working hard to improve the situation.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and the school is successful at raising the pupils' self-esteem. Pupils develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in these areas that will contribute well to their economic well-being and help them become responsible citizens. Cultural development is not sufficiently well planned across the curriculum.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and there is an enthusiasm for sport and dance. However, some pupils do not make healthy choices about what they eat. Pupils make a good contribution to their school and its wider community, for example, by taking on voluntary responsibilities and by participating in performances. The very inclusive arts events unify the pupils and bring the school community together. The school council has good ideas and has helped with the selection of senior staff but more could be done to enable the wider pupil population to help shape future developments.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well structured and engaging. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and give good support for pupils requiring extra help. Good use is made of clear learning objectives and tasks are well designed to meet these objectives and the needs of learners. Teachers give good oral feedback during lessons and make their expectations clear, so that pupils make good progress. The high quality of teachers' questioning challenges pupils to think more deeply and provide more detailed explanations. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects, enabling them to respond flexibly and creatively to their pupils' developing knowledge and skill. The approach to marking pupils' work is inconsistent and does not yet provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve in all subjects. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils, and among the pupils themselves. Behaviour is well managed in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Teachers make good use of National Curriculum levels to inform planning. Targets are set annually with parents and pupils giving them a clear understanding of what needs to be achieved each year. Monitoring of pupils' progress across the years is less developed within the school. Some departments have good systems and this practice needs to be employed consistently so that progress for all pupils can be improved. The school is aware of this and has already started to improve whole-school systems.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is increasingly matched to pupils' needs and aspirations. The increase in vocational courses, for example, in engineering and expressive arts, has motivated pupils who might struggle with more academic choices. Provision for gifted and talented pupils has improved but more needs to be done.

The current timetable hinders the time available for religious education or English at Key Stage 4. Plans for a new timetable in September should address this. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is covered satisfactorily but is not regularly monitored to ensure all pupils have equal access to good provision. This is especially important as the teachers are not specialists in the subject.

Pupils' experience is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including residential visits. There is a wide variety of clubs in music, information and communication technology, sport and dance and these are well supported at lunchtime and after school. Specialist Performing Arts status has improved opportunities for all pupils. Recent productions, shows and competitions have enabled large numbers of pupils from Years 7 to 11 to come together, taking an enjoyable and active role in the life of the school. Work with the Community Arts Group and Henley Drama Group has offered further creative opportunity. However, implementation has not been as fast as expected due to significant staffing difficulties.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and they receive good guidance and support. Many pupils commented on how encouraging and willing staff are to help. Pupils with additional needs have access to good provision. The staff responsible keep a careful overview of their progress and participation in school. The 'Inclusion zone' is used to give pupils planned intervention for both social and academic learning and has been positive in helping pupils to manage their own behaviour and make progress in academic skills. Partnership with parents and pupils to set annual targets makes a positive contribution to the good progress made by pupils. However, some pupils need more help to understand how school work will help them achieve their own ambitions.

The learning support department offers relevant and useful advice to teachers, working with them to develop strategies which will, in turn, help pupils overcome some of their barriers to learning. These strategies are used well to inform lesson planning and help staff match work to the needs of the pupils. Teaching assistants are limited in number but are well deployed to help pupils make progress.

Safeguarding procedures are well organised and successful in helping to protect pupils. Staff have received up to date training and know the procedures well. Recruitment procedures also help to keep pupils safe, although the recording of pre-employment checks needs formalising.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership and management of the school are the result of the complementary skills of the team members. The personal leadership style of the headteacher is exemplary in creating a caring community in which all can grow in self-confidence and respect for others.

Procedures for evaluating the work of departments are good but are not always sufficient in analysing pupils' achievement over time. Middle managers are analytical and collaborate well with the leadership team on school improvement. As a result, there is a strong focus on teaching and learning with a common approach to lesson planning. Lesson observation is regular but not systematic. Opportunities for professional development are satisfactory but there is scope for greater sharing of good practice between departments. Next term's arrangements should make this exchange more feasible.

The school has good capacity to improve because it accurately identifies areas of strength and where improvement is required. It is forward looking in its plans to develop as a Performing Arts college, seeing the potential for inclusion and improving progress for all pupils. Implementation has encountered some difficulties. The quality of development planning is very good in the short term but needs to be set within a longer-term framework. The views of parents and pupils are reflected in the school's

plans and actions. Finances are managed well, keeping within a tight budget and achieving best value.

The management team has worked hard to improve the school within the constraints posed by the school's limited accommodation and staffing problems. Progress with the development of religious education in Key Stage 4 since the last inspection has been rather slow.

Governors make an excellent contribution to the school with carefully balanced support and challenge. They exercise their responsibilities very efficiently and closely monitor the work of departments. Governors' expertise is used successfully to benefit the school and their assistance in making the specialist college bid took some of the burden off the school.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We very much enjoyed our visit and the opportunity to meet so many of you over the two days. We were impressed by your confidence when discussing your views of the school and valued your contribution to our inspection.

Your school is well led and managed and provides a good education. The staff team work in successful partnership with you and your parents. Teaching in the school is good overall and helps you make good progress. Exam results are above the national average. The school equips you well for your future lives and many of you appreciate the careful guidance and support you receive.

The school has a good insight into how it can continue to improve. Forthcoming changes to the timetable will help improve the balance of the curriculum in Key Stage 4. Good partnership with other schools and colleges helps the school to provide more vocational subjects for you to study.

Although plans for improving the performing arts have had a difficult start, there are already increasing opportunities for you to become involved in exciting projects. The school has limited resources but uses these well.

We have asked the school to monitor your progress more carefully so that they can identify when you need more help. Some of you are particularly gifted and talented and need more opportunities to develop a wider range of knowledge and skills.

We wish you every success in the future.