



Myton School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125767
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293360
Inspection dates 15–16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Hitch

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Myton Road
School category	Foundation		Warwick
Age range of pupils	11–18		CV34 6PJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01926 493805
Number on roll (school)	1334	Fax number	01926 490380
Number on roll (6th form)	290		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Steve Nicklin
		Headteacher	Ben Godber
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–18	15–16 November 2006	293360

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Myton School is a popular and oversubscribed science college and is well regarded by the local community. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is slightly above average as is the number of students who speak English as an additional language. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals and those with special educational need are below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Myton School is a good school with a number of outstanding features, one of which is the thriving sixth form. Students take pride in themselves and their school. The caring and supportive nature of staff and students is present in all aspects of school life. The students' very positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour show clearly that they are determined to make the most of their time at Myton. The school is highly regarded in the local community. Specialist science college targets relating to partnerships with other institutions and links to the community are met very well. Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher has used the wide experience of the leadership team and middle managers to guide the school effectively through a period of transition while awaiting the arrival of the new headteacher. During this time, effective self-review has been used well to identify areas for improvement. The newly-appointed head of the science department has a sound action plan to further raise achievement in science. Departmental monitoring procedures are well established. The improvements they have brought have contributed significantly to meeting specialist school targets. However, in some subjects, these procedures are not sufficiently focused on raising standards.

Students achieve well by the time they leave Myton. At Key Stage 3, standards continue to rise. Achievement at Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations based on students' level of attainment on entry. At GCSE, attainment is above average and, for the majority of subjects, standards are high. In an effort to raise standards even further, the school is now beginning to set more ambitious student targets so that its performance matches the best quarter of schools nationally. Although students' performance in English is not as strong as in other subjects at Key Stage 4, the newly-appointed head of the department has recognised this and is implementing suitable actions to address the issue.

Through its outreach as a specialist college, links to primary schools are well established and are used effectively to provide a smooth transition into the school. The good curriculum is well balanced and allows students to follow a range of courses at GCSE level, including French, design and technology and religious education. The school makes good use of links with local colleges to provide alternative courses for some students, and although there are some opportunities for vocational learning in science and information and communication technology, these are relatively limited.

The school fosters a strong sense of community through the excellent care, support and guidance it provides for students. Relationships between staff and students are very good and students have excellent attitudes to learning. Extra-curricular activities are extremely well attended and students have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding.

The quality of teaching ranges from outstanding to satisfactory and is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. Good use is made of the latest information and communication technology (ICT) resources that are in nearly all classrooms. In the best lessons, students are given the opportunity to take a lead

in their own learning. Where teaching is not as good, teachers spend too much time presenting information to students and using questions that give students little opportunity to explore their own answers. Many students are given helpful guidance about how to improve their work, for example in humanities and modern foreign languages. However, this is not a consistent feature in all subjects and departments.

The school has a good capacity to improve and is very well placed to achieve its high aspiration to become an outstanding school.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The school judges the effectiveness of its sixth form to be good. Inspectors judge it outstanding. Standards were above average in 2005 and improved further in 2006. Students' achievement is excellent and the sixth form provides good value for money.

Students' attainment on entry to the sixth form is slightly above average. A combination of outstanding teaching, rigorous monitoring and excellent student-teacher relations ensures they make outstanding progress.

The curriculum is outstanding and, through closer working with other local institutions, many options have been developed to extend the range of subjects that can be studied. This is providing excellent provision for middle and lower-attaining students. Class sizes are large enough to allow discussions and sharing of ideas to take place. This has contributed positively to good independent learning and is well established in history.

The sixth form provides excellent opportunities for students to exercise responsibility and leadership. Students' responses have been outstanding and they have enthusiastically taken up charity work, a 'buddy' system for younger students, responsibility for the organisation of a fashion show and participation in work-related and community activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement further in science and English.
- Make sure that all students receive helpful and useful guidance about how they can improve their work.
- Increase opportunities for vocational learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Overall achievement is good and standards are above average. In a few subjects, such as design and technology and French, achievement is outstanding. Students' attainment on entry to the school is slightly above average. Between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, students make satisfactory progress, which is in line with national trends. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 continue to show a rising trend. At Key Stage 4, students

attain high standards in many subjects and their overall achievement is good when considering their attainment on entry at Key Stage 2. Progression from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is excellent. However, standards in English and science at GCSE are not as high as in other subject areas.

Standards in the sixth form are well above average and the students achieve very well. Boys perform better than girls at A-level. Standards are high and this year's GCE A-level results show good improvement since 2005. Standards are particularly high in psychology, English Literature and religious education. French and physics results have improved, although small numbers of students take the subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Students' personal development is outstanding. Most students enter the school with very positive attitudes which the school fosters and develops further. As a result, the students are attentive in lessons, work hard and take pride in their good achievements. Attendance is good and above the national average. The school received an award from the local authority for the secondary school with the best attendance in 2005–06. Students' work within the community, a good PSHE programme and a well-planned religious education course all contribute to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. One student said, 'Everyone knows that poor behaviour is unacceptable'. Relationships between staff and students, and students themselves, are good. Students from different ethnic groups work well together. Many students support other students, for example through the sixth form buddy scheme with Year 7. Visitors to the school are made to feel welcome. Students participate fully in all aspects of school life. Attendance at school clubs is high, with a very good level of involvement in sporting activities contributing well to students' healthy lifestyles. Members of the school council welcomed the opportunity to participate in the appointment of the new headteacher. They made a valuable contribution to the new anti-bullying policy to address some concerns raised through questionnaires to students. Considerable sums of money are raised for local and other charities. Year 10 students are currently raising money to support schools in a South African township.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Teachers plan their lessons well. The widespread use of interactive white boards is having a positive impact on the quality of students' learning. Students work well in

pairs and in small discussion groups although, on occasions, they have too few opportunities to work independently and think for themselves, and their progress is slower. This contrasts with the best lessons, where students are given the opportunity to take a lead in their own learning. Teachers manage classes efficiently and establish an atmosphere conducive to work through a balance of fair discipline and good relationships. The banding and setting arrangements enable teachers to pitch their lessons at the right level, so that all pupils can make good progress. In a few lessons, work was not adapted sufficiently to meet the individual needs of some students.

The school has successfully introduced a range of national strategies, including 'assessment for learning' which is having a beneficial impact on students' performance. This is particularly effective in religious education and the humanities. There is some variability in the quality of feedback on students' assessed work but, in general, they are given clear pointers as to how they can improve to advance to the next level. Teachers prepare pupils well for external tests and exams, and the increasing use of peer and self-assessment makes many students fully aware of the criteria against which they are to be examined.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school has highly effective links with primary schools through its outreach as a specialist college, and this ensures a smooth curricular transition for students entering Year 7. Students receive the full National Curriculum in Key Stage 3, plus drama and the opportunity to start a second language in Year 9. There is a good programme for pupils' personal development and an annual audit of citizenship across the curriculum shows reasonable coverage. The small number of students who enter the school without the basic skills to access the curriculum are well supported to boost their levels of attainment. Fast-tracking of the most able pupils in science and mathematics allows them to make an early start on GCSE courses. An expansion of the accelerated learning through Key Stage 3 is part of forthcoming curriculum review. Extra-curricular provision is excellent, notably sport and performing arts.

In Key Stage 4, the school ensures a broad and balanced curriculum by making modern foreign language, and design and technology, core subjects. Students achieve high standards in these subjects. An outstanding feature of the Key Stage 4 curriculum is the position of religious education (RE) in the core curriculum. All pupils take a GCSE course in RE which combines many aspects of citizenship. Work-related learning is also a strong feature taught through the weekly careers lesson. In this area, the school works well with the local business partnership to provide extra events that relate pupils' work in school to the world of work. One area for development is that of vocational courses, which the school is looking to develop under the 14-19 review.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Care, guidance and support for students are outstanding. Health and safety, risk assessment and child protection procedures are all in place. Students with learning difficulties are well supported through targeted support programmes. These include literacy and numeracy skills for younger students and alternative provision for older students who have difficulties in settling and coping with their GCSE studies. The range of care and support provided by the school for students with personal difficulties is impressive. Students expressed their appreciation of the sensitivity of staff to individual circumstances. The school has good systems in place to monitor students' attainment and progress and identify underachievement. Students and parents are involved in setting subject and personal targets. These are suitably challenging and help students achieve well. Effectively planned and coordinated guidance and support through the careers lessons and work of the Connexions service enable students to make well-informed choices about further study and careers on leaving school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. The acting headteacher works very well with an effective team of senior managers and together they have successfully involved other staff in self-evaluation and decision-making. This has led directly to the good quality of middle management. The management structure holds subject heads accountable for implementation of school policies on teaching and learning and on assessment. The school has good systems for monitoring the implementation of these policies and good use is made of data to track and evaluate attainment and progress. While assessment data is being used to raise standards in many subjects, this is not yet a consistent feature in all areas of the school's work.

A range of good strategies have been introduced to support students' progress but some of these are relatively new and have yet to be coordinated across the school to ensure the maximum impact on students' achievement. The school's monitoring and evaluation of teaching is accurate, based mainly on lesson observations. There is an effective self review programme, which includes using external agencies to provide ongoing and impartial quality assurance.

The school makes effective use of its own expertise to spread good practice among staff to develop their skills and raise standards. Resources are deployed efficiently and finances are well managed. The school's self-review is accurate. The issues identified for improvement are appropriate and there are clear strategies to evaluate its success. Targets included in the specialist school action plan are met consistently, and extra finance has been used to develop community aspects of science. Governance overall is good. The active governing body is well informed and understands the school's

strengths and weaknesses well. It has ensured that statutory requirements are generally met, apart from the provision of a daily act of collective worship.

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	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	2	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
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	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	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	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	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?	2	1
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	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

Thank you for welcoming me and the inspection team into your school. We appreciated how you talked to us in your lessons and shared your opinions about Myton School. We enjoyed the opportunities we had to see you learn and to be involved in your assemblies, and we valued the discussions we had with members of the school council and sixth formers on Wednesday. These showed how proud you are of the school and your achievements. Your views and the views of your parents have helped us to understand what is distinctive about your school.

You've told us that you benefit from the many opportunities you have to take part in enriching activities that have been made possible as a specialist college. You make good progress and get to follow a wide range of courses which are stimulating and interesting. You told us how much you valued the care and guidance that teachers give to you and how much they encourage you to be the best that you can be.

You are rightly proud of your school and, just like the adults who work with you, want it to get even better. You'll be pleased to know that our recommendations for what the school should do to improve further include that in your lessons you do even more of the work! In many of your lessons, teachers help you to ask more questions, solve problems, take on more responsibility, explain to other students how well they are doing and what they could do better, and how you yourself can improve. We think this can happen more consistently throughout the school. From what we saw of your reaction when you had these opportunities in lessons, you'll enjoy the challenge and your progress will be even better. We have also asked the acting headteacher to make sure that more of you achieve better in English and science and to make sure those of you in Year 10 and 11 have greater opportunities to explore options for vocational learning.

Thank you again for making our two days so enjoyable.