

# Sackville School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126089
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	293466
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheila Browning

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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1318
6th form	285
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Hollins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Robson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 February 2001
<b>School address</b>	Lewes Road East Grinstead RH19 3TY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01342 410140
<b>Fax number</b>	01342 315544

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sackville is a larger than average school that has specialist status for engineering. It also holds International status, Artsmark silver, Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards and is a member of the local school's consortium. The majority of pupils come from East Grinstead and are of White British origin, although the proportion from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is growing. Many pupils come from economically advantaged social circumstances though increasing numbers of pupils come from further afield and the profile of the school is slowly changing. Attainment on entry has declined over recent years and is currently broadly average.

## 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 and improving school. Standards are significantly above national averages and achievement is good overall. Test and examination results show improvement year on year. In the past pupils have not achieved as well as they should given their starting points. Recent successful strategies in English, mathematics and science have halted the trend of past underachievement. School data show that pupils now make good progress in Years 7 to 11. Tracking of pupils' progress is more robust, with sharper targeting of those at risk of underachievement. This, combined with more consistent approaches to teaching and learning, is securing better achievement but some gaps remain. Not all lessons focus strongly enough on individual pupils' needs and the use of assessment to set suitably challenging targets is not uniformly applied. Some underachievement in modern foreign languages also remains. The school correctly recognises that achievement, although mostly good, could improve further. The more challenging targets which it has set itself have not yet been realised.

The school's specialism has given a huge boost to mathematics, science and design and technology and has helped improve the quality of provision across the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Parents say their children enjoy school and feel safe. Arrangements for health, safety and child protection are secure. Care, guidance and support are good. Relationships based on mutual trust and respect and good support help pupils to gain in confidence. Pupils make a good contribution to the local and wider community. Attendance is in line with the national average and behaviour is good. Most teaching and learning are good or better as a result of the intensive training and support programmes. The good curriculum in Years 7 to 11 shows the flexibility required to meet pupils' needs and this is a strength. Pupils are well prepared for employment, training or further education. Targets are set for pupils and are monitored frequently. Most understand what they need to do to improve, but where pupils are not stretched fully in some lessons achievement suffers.

Leadership and management at all levels are good and are impacting well and raising standards. Recent restructuring and strong appointments of key staff at both senior and middle management levels, and the more robust monitoring systems enable middle leaders to clearly understand the strengths and weaknesses within their areas. The school correctly realises that achievement, although good, could be improved further to reach the challenging targets which it has set itself at GCSE and to seek improvements which it has committed itself to in the sixth form.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The sixth form is satisfactory overall. Standards are similar to those found nationally and achievement is satisfactory and therefore not high enough. Students have a good range of academic courses. As a result of specialist status participation in science has increased substantially. The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for religious education, and vocational opportunities are limited. Students speak well of the personal and academic guidance provided by the school. They show a good awareness of a wide range of personal learning skills preparing them well for the future.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement especially in modern foreign languages and in the sixth form.
- Share the very good practice seen in the best teaching and in particular by making more consistent use of assessment to set challenging individual targets.
- Increase the range of courses offered in the sixth form to include vocational courses and religious education.

## Achievement and standards

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Standards are consistently above those nationally and are improving year on year. Achievement is good and the value added by the school to pupils' learning is improving. In the 2006 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, pupils achieved significantly better in English than in mathematics and science. Since then the rate of progress has improved because of more accurate monitoring of pupils' progress, and improved teacher skills. School data confirm that most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress towards the more challenging targets set in the current Years 7 to 9. GCSE results rose sharply in 2006 to significantly above average and more than half of the pupils gained five or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics. Despite this, there is still too much variation between subjects. As with younger pupils, more rigorous checks on pupils' progress, better targeted intervention programmes and improved teaching are helping pupils to progress better towards their targets. Progress in Years 10 and 11 shows recent improvement but there still remain pockets of underachievement as in modern foreign languages. School data confirm that pupils are now making more rapid progress and lessons observed indicates good progress. Standards in the sixth form are similar to those found nationally. Given students' starting points they make satisfactory, but some inconsistent, progress across different subjects and as a result achievement in the sixth form is not as high as it could be.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Personal development is good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well showing that they feel safe and enjoy school. The exclusion process is used only when justified and is in line with the school's policies and expectations. Where bullying occurs it mainly involves younger pupils and, apart from a very few cases, is well dealt with. Attendance is satisfactory and close to national averages. Although not as prevalent as previously, and despite the best efforts of the school, the overall attendance rate is affected by families who take holidays during term time. Pupils eat healthily and most join in the many sport activities available to them. The high standards achieved and alternative courses provided to suit individual pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities ensure all are well prepared for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are polite and friendly, and relationships are outstanding. The growing international links contribute well to the good cultural awareness of pupils. Their spiritual development is less well developed. Pupils make a full contribution to school life and make good use of the many opportunities to take on responsibilities such as buddies and prefects. They contribute to the wider community well through charity fund raising, work experience and community service.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are good. The school's policy to support teaching through monitoring and evaluation and feedback is leading to ongoing improvement. Positive relationships between teachers and their pupils, based on mutual trust and respect, and good planning ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to achieve in the lesson. A range of exciting things for pupils to do, often requiring them to think at several levels at the same time, regular homework and careful and supportive marking are all features of the best lessons, helping pupils to become more independent in their thinking. Most teaching seen during the inspection was good or better, though there are still areas in which the quality of teaching could improve. Use of assessment to pinpoint pupils' needs is not yet a feature all lessons. Lesson objectives are not always challenging enough, and the pace of some lessons allows pupils to stray away from what they are supposed to be doing. When this happens, pupils become too reliant upon their teachers and do not learn as well as they could. In the sixth form teaching has improved but has not yet eradicated the inconsistencies in students' achievement in different subjects.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is good overall and satisfactory in the sixth form. It is increasingly well matched to pupils' needs in the main school. The school has recognised the need to build on pupils' literacy competences across the curriculum and measures introduced, although at a comparatively early stage, are having a positive effect. Statutory requirements are not met for religious education in the sixth form. An impressive variety of course options is offered including Young Apprenticeships, Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications, and accelerated GCSE courses. This range is indicative of the positive effect that the school's specialist status in engineering is having on the curriculum. Sackville is working closely with primary schools on an engineering scheme. The many opportunities for work related learning are further enhanced by links with local businesses. The school offers additional challenge for more able pupils through fast track courses. The choice of extra-curricular activities is outstanding; they promote teamwork and cooperation and contribute well to pupils' personal development. The school has International status and an excellent variety of educational trips and visits is offered. In the sixth form the choice of vocational courses is limited.

### Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Child protection procedures are fully in place. The school has good systems to support those pupils in public care who come from a number of local authorities. The school's approach to health and safety is good with ongoing reviews of risk assessments and regular inspections involving both the school staff and external organisations. Access to medical provision is good. Pupils are well supported when they join the school; they

get good advice on subject choices and career or further education progression. Sixth form students say they really appreciated the advice and support they received. The school has improved data collection and analysis, which better supports academic monitoring and guidance, and all pupils are set targets. However, use of assessment data to ensure these targets and the work set are sufficiently challenging is inconsistent across subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support in class and parents are fully involved in review processes.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good in the main school and satisfactory in the sixth form. There is a renewed sense of purpose and a sharper focus on improving teaching, learning and achievement. The headteacher provides strong leadership, supported by a senior team that has a shared sense of purpose and a determination to improve. A detailed programme of observation and evaluation ensures that the school knows what needs to be done and this indicates a good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is used well by subject leaders. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and the removal of any barriers to pupils' academic and personal development. Aspects of leadership and management in the sixth form are strong but the impact of actions taken to improve provision has yet to eradicate the differences in students' achievement.

Governors know their responsibilities and support the work of the school well. They are beginning to challenge the school about priorities more rigorously. Finances are well managed such as the improvements made to address the school's considerable ongoing accommodation problems. The school works effectively in partnership with external agencies, local schools and colleges. Since gaining specialist status the school has developed a clear engineering focus and a range of projects and interesting manufacturing and enterprise opportunities for pupils across all year groups. The school is well staffed and individual training needs identified. The very good range of good quality resources, especially interactive whiteboards, has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and achievement. Links with parents are good. The school reacted well to parents' and governors' concerns about the time allocated for study leave, and as a result students are now kept at school until written examinations start, with access to teacher support. Improvement since the last inspection and measures in place to raise achievement indicate a good capacity to improve further.

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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>	<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?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
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	2	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>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
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	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

<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>	2	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	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

23 May 2007

Dear Pupils and Students

Inspection of Sackville School, East Grinstead, RH19 3TY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. You were very courteous and polite. We enjoyed our discussions with you and your views and opinions helped to inform our judgements. Sackville is a good school where teaching is good. The particular strengths are:

- You reach above average standards in your work in Years 9 to 11.
- Your school is well led by your headteacher, senior staff and governors, who are determined to ensure that the school continues to improve and that each of you is helped to do your very best.
- Your attitudes to learning and relationships are very positive and you are developing into mature and responsible young adults, well prepared to tackle the challenges in your future.
- You, your parents and carers told us how much you enjoy school, feel safe and are being well cared for, we agree.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities and numerous enrichment activities that support your personal development well.

We have asked the school to continue to improve in some important areas:

- Improve progress and standards in modern foreign languages and improve progress in the sixth form by increasing the level of challenge for all.
- Ensure that the very good practice seen in the best teaching, particularly in stretching pupils and students of all abilities, is shared to improve learning and raise standards.
- Increase the range of courses offered in the sixth form to include vocational courses and make sure that legal requirements are met for religious education.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Browning Lead inspector