

Heathfield High School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	120241
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	296443
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Joyce HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	576
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeanette Faulkner
Headteacher	Graham Jones
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001
School address	Belle Vue Road Earl Shilton Leicester LE9 7PA
Telephone number	01455 842149
Fax number	01455 840535

Age group	11-14
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to factual inaccuracy

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Heathfield High School is a smaller than average school with the vast majority of students drawn from the surrounding villages of this semi-rural area of Leicestershire. The number of students entitled to free school meals is below the national average but numbers are rising. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is above average and the proportion identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is significantly above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. Many improvements have been made since the last inspection and staff work hard to continue improving the quality of education provided. It is a friendly place with vibrant displays of students' work in classrooms and corridors that significantly enhance the learning environment. Staff are rightly proud of the supportive culture within the school. This inclusive environment enables students joining Year 7 to quickly settle into the school. Good care, guidance and support are provided throughout and students are well prepared for transition to the next stage of their education. The school works well with a number of external agencies to support the personal development and well-being of its students. Their attitudes to learning are good, and they particularly enjoy the wide-ranging physical education curriculum and the extra-curricular sporting activities, as well as using information and communication technology (ICT) resources such as computers during lessons.

Students have a secure understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, and an increasing number participate in regular physical activity during their social time both in and out of school. Most students behave well, and whilst a minority sometimes disrupt lessons, students report that they feel safe and that staff deal with incidents of inappropriate behaviour effectively and consistently.

Students' achievement is satisfactory overall. In some subjects, and notably in English and mathematics, students make good progress and achieve well. However, the rate of progress does vary. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is much good teaching but lesson planning is not yet consistently good enough to enable all students to achieve well. The monitoring of students' progress is effective in some subjects but staff do not have sufficient access to a complete picture of students' performance to monitor their individual progress during form time.

The satisfactory curriculum helps students gain an understanding of their rights and responsibilities and enables them to develop good skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being. An active school council enables students to make a positive contribution to the school community, and they also participate in a range of fund raising activities and other events in the local community. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements have been significantly enhanced and are now used well by senior leaders to target improvement. However, the rate of improvement is inconsistent across the school because middle managers are not sufficiently involved in monitoring activities. Governors support the school well. The school's self-evaluation, whilst over-estimating the overall effectiveness as good, accurately identifies the main strengths and areas for improvement. The school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that consistently good pace and challenge in lessons enable all students to make good progress and achieve to their full potential.
- Provide access to a complete picture of students' performance to enable staff to more effectively monitor students' overall progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of management in implementing change to ensure staff are fully engaged and that improvement is more consistent across the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Students enter the school in Year 7 with broadly average levels of attainment although proportionally there are fewer higher attaining students than usually found. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and attainment levels as shown by national tests at the end of Year 9 are in line with national averages. The rate of progress in different subjects is variable across the school. Progress in English and mathematics is good, whilst in science students make satisfactory progress. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall and some make good progress, improving their levels of reading and writing considerably. School performance data show that overall all students make at least satisfactory progress and no specific groups underachieve. The school makes good use of achievement data to monitor performance and data analysis is comprehensive. Information is used effectively to target improvement activities and target-setting is becoming increasingly more sophisticated. Students are set individual targets based on their prior attainment and additionally have more challenging targets set to encourage better achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Most students have a good attitude towards learning and the majority enjoy their education, as reflected in the above average attendance rates. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and is adequately promoted through a curriculum that provides opportunities for students to reflect, discuss and debate. Healthy lifestyles are promoted within school and a range of healthy eating options are offered. Students are starting to consider the impact of lifestyles on health and many now opt for healthier food choices and take physical exercise. However, although planned for introduction, the school does not yet provide sufficient access to drinking water.

Students adopt safe practices well in lessons and carefully follow instructions given by teachers. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Students reported that they feel supported and that they are confident in the way staff deal with the few incidents of bullying that occur. Students were particularly supportive of the work of trained peer mentors, operating through a scheme known in the school as 'Speak to Us'. Some parents remained concerned about bullying attitudes in the school. An active school council enables students to influence the running of the school. Links with the local community are good and involve students in a variety of endeavours including fund raising events for charities. Careers advice and guidance events and opportunities for vocational educational together with the good development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills equip students well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching varies across the school and although there is some good teaching, it is not yet consistently good throughout the school. Typically teachers plan lessons effectively and share objectives with students; the pace of learning is usually appropriate and enables most students to make satisfactory progress. However, although clearly improving, some lessons do not sufficiently challenge the more able students and they do not achieve to their full potential. The school recognises this as an area for improvement in its own self-evaluation. Progress is good in lessons where learning objectives are specific and suited to students' level of ability, and where teaching methods are matched to individuals' learning styles. Learning support assistants are well prepared for lessons and provide good, valuable and targeted support to students with specific learning needs which helps them make progress. Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and learning have improved and are now good. The introduction of different learning outcomes for students of different ability levels within the same class is beginning to enable teachers to plan lessons more effectively to meet the full range of students' needs. Homework is set and marked frequently and students realise the importance and benefit of completing this work. However, the quality of marking is variable throughout the school and feedback to students does not always detail what they need to do to improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It provides a broad and balanced range of activities that meet statutory requirements. Recent changes have been made to the personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum although the impact of these is yet to be fully assessed. The curriculum includes an interesting programme of visits, visitors and residential trips that play a positive part in students' personal development. Most students participate in a satisfactory range of additional topics, including financial awareness, during a weekly 'curriculum enhancement' period.

There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities although the impact of these on students' wider learning experiences has yet to be evaluated. Students particularly appreciate and enjoy the sporting opportunities that are provided during the physical education curriculum and during after-school activities. Curricular provision for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The lunchtime inclusion club for the most vulnerable pupils and the reading challenge programme for students in Year 7 have made a good contribution towards raising individual achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral support is very effective and staff work with an increasing number of agencies to ensure that students' welfare and well-being are safeguarded. However, despite this, a small number of parents who returned inspection questionnaires raised concerns about the school's response to some specific issues. Transition arrangements from feeder primary schools are good and enable students joining in Year 7 to quickly settle into their new school. Students in Year 9 are well prepared for their move to upper school and receive good supportive careers advice

and guidance interviews and appropriate information to enable them to make option choices. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities appreciate the good support they receive that ensures they are not disadvantaged and are able to participate fully in the life of the school. Academic support is well provided by subject teachers, however, form teachers do not have sufficient access to students' subject performance records to effectively monitor the overall progress of individuals within their tutor groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is well supported by an able and committed senior leadership team and together they set a clear direction for the school that is focused on improvement. Many changes have been introduced that have benefited students. However, some of these, whilst entirely appropriate, were introduced in a manner that did not please all staff. A minority of staff, and a few parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires, expressed some concern over the style of management within the school although working relationships are generally positive. Senior leaders have improved monitoring and evaluation arrangements significantly and use them very effectively to ensure equality of opportunity is promoted and students achieve as well as they can. However, middle managers are not sufficiently involved in monitoring and improving some aspects of the quality of provision within their areas of responsibility. Governors are supportive of the school and are becoming effective at holding the school to account for its performance. Many governors are involved in 'curriculum reviews' and these are useful in enabling governors to gain a closer insight into the workings of the school and in monitoring and improving individual subject performance. Financial management is strong.

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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>	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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

- 22 June 2007 Dear Students Inspection of Heathfield High School, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire. LE9 7PA As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the outcome of the inspection. Before I do, I would like to thank you all for your help during our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and your comments helped us form our judgements about your school. Many of you told us that you enjoyed going to school and especially liked the sporting activities and the work that you do on computers. We were pleased that you thought your school was a friendly place and that the teachers cared for you and supported you well. We agree with you, and you and your staff made us very welcome. We were very impressed with the displays of your work around the school and it was clear to us that improvements had been made since the last time inspectors visited. We found your school to be satisfactory overall with some good features. Your headteacher and his staff are clearly focused on improving your school and they monitor what happens well. The areas we found which the school needs to address to improve further so you can make more progress are:
 - To make lessons more challenging for you, so all of you make even better progress and learn even more.
 - To improve the way the school monitors the overall progress you make.
 - To give more responsibility to managers such as subject leaders, so that improvements in all areas of the school take place at the same rate. You can help the school staff by continuing to concentrate and work hard in all of your lessons. We wish you well in the future. Yours faithfully Paul Joyce Her Majesty's Inspector