



Prince Henry's High School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 117000
Local Authority Worcestershire
Inspection number 298634
Inspection date 28 November 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Cartwright HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Victoria Avenue
School category	Foundation		Evesham
Age range of pupils	13-18		WR11 4QH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01386 765588
Number on roll (school)	935	Fax number	01386 40760
Number on roll (6th form)	378		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	John Painter
		Headteacher	Bernard Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
13-18	28 November 2006	298634

Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to administration error

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This large high school has students of predominantly White British heritage. The socio-economic circumstances of families are favourable overall, with low proportions of students entitled to free school meals. There are relatively low numbers of students with learning difficulties or disabilities. The school has been a Specialist Language College since 2002.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Prince Henry's High School is providing an outstanding quality of education. Both learners and teachers thrive in a harmonious and superbly well-orchestrated team, expertly led and very well managed by dedicated professional staff. The climate for learning is exceptionally good, driven by a clear, shared vision to ensure every learner can and will achieve of their best. The personal development of students is outstanding, thanks to an excellent range of formal and extended curriculum opportunities, high levels of student participation in school and community life, and active intervention by the school on healthy eating. The behaviour of students is very good, their attitudes and motivation to learn very strong, and they overwhelmingly enjoy school life in all of its richness, in and out of lessons. The school cares very well for its learners, of all abilities and challenges, with a shared and very strong commitment by all staff to ensure that the most vulnerable and least motivated students fully benefit and engage in learning. All these positive elements combine with consistently good teaching throughout the school so that students make outstanding academic progress and achieve exceptionally high standards.

Standards are continuing to rise, overall. The school relentlessly focuses on any aspect of its performance that appears to be falling short, with immediate positive effects. The headteacher personifies the determination to ensure success for every single learner, and empowers other leaders and managers at all levels to act on these learners' behalf. For example, the school has developed a 'one step ahead' group of learners at risk of failing to complete Year 11 courses who have instead already gained GCSE results in Year 10, freeing Year 11 time for extended vocational study alongside further skills education.

Leadership and management of the headteacher and his team are outstanding. They have established a dynamic culture of almost daily monitoring and evaluation at department level, and this ensures all staff feel part of a team contributing to students' achievement and well-being. They model the care and consideration for students with their own mutual support, resulting in a professional working environment that encourages sharing of good practice, and they support one another with advice. Many staff started their teaching career at Prince Henry's, and there is a very good system of induction and training built into the professional development programme for staff. This is a key strand that contributes to the high quality of education. Because of this high-quality in-house professional development, staff readily go the extra mile on behalf of students to ensure each one achieves of their best.

Governors clearly have a very detailed and accurate understanding of the school. Unusually, there are systematic records made of 'attached governor' visits to the school, indicating a close relationship of both support and challenge. For example, they have taken a close look at the extent to which the school supports healthy eating.

The school is rightly determined to improve the health and well-being of its learners, and insists on students taking a healthy lunch, be it coming from home or provided in school.

School development planning does address the pertinent issues, but is focused on developing provision. This approach is also reflected in the instruments used by the school to evaluate its quality of teaching, which emphasise the activities of the teacher, rather than assess the impact these are having on student learning. But the school is improving, even if the plans do not set out success targets quite as precisely as they might, because the school's leadership has its finger on the pulse of the school.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Students in the sixth form attain high standards, and evidence from the recent 2006 results suggests they are continuing to make the reasonably good progress of 2005. The school also evaluates its sixth form as good. Overall, students experience a good, academically focused curriculum and an outstanding personal development experience. Most succeed in transition to higher education, and all play a big part in the life of the school community through duties and responsibilities as prefects. Good sixth form leadership is sensitive to the progress of students, with actions in place to support some students at risk of lower A-level grades. It has modified its entry requirements to try to ensure students embark on appropriate courses. The current local collaborative arrangements make mixing vocational and academic subjects difficult on one site. Students wishing to pursue Level 2 courses can only do so elsewhere.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen evaluation procedures to include clear student outcomes as success criteria.
- Continue to increase the impact of local consortia arrangements to improve the flexibility of courses at available at 16.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

At both Key Stage 3 and 4, academic standards in national tests and examinations are exceptionally high. Students generally gained a little above- average standards in their previous school, and therefore make outstanding progress by the time they complete Year 11. The school rapidly responded to some shortfalls in English in 2005, and has resolved them very well. All groups of learners achieve equally well. The apparent slightly less strong progress of girls in 2005 has been resolved in 2006, primarily through improvements in English.

Sixth form standards are above average and represent good progress for the majority of students.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

This is outstanding, because every member of staff contributes to ensuring students grow into confident, compassionate young people able to lead a healthy and rewarding life. The school rarely needs to use exclusions, and these are very low and reducing over time. Attendance at school is good, with remarkably low levels of unauthorised absence. Healthy food is firmly established, whatever its source (home or school) and the huge range of sports and recreational activities contributes to a very good healthy lifestyle. This is complemented by an exhaustive programme of cultural activities, trips and visits. The language specialist college status is the key driving force in widening students' cultural horizons. Each year group has an effective council that helps improve student life, although the main student responsibility roles are largely the preserve of sixth formers. These students have initiated a very effective 'peer mentoring' system for younger students.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school evaluates this as good overall, and this is consistent with the inspection findings. The key strength of the school is in the consistency of this good practice across every subject area. This, in turn, is because of a systematic professional development programme, including excellent training for student teachers and induction for newly qualified staff; many current teaching staff began their career at Prince Henry's and some of them were student teachers here. When combined with very positive student attitudes to learning and supportive family backgrounds, and an appropriate curriculum, the outcome is outstanding achievement, more often than not.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

In the main school, students enjoy a very rich and varied range of curriculum routes, including many modern foreign language courses. Option choice is fully 'free', and the school does not construct its timetable until after choices are known. The vast majority of students are studying the programme they chose. A notable feature is the arrangements made for students at risk of disengaging from the normal curriculum; these learners complete the key GCSEs earlier than usual in order to follow a work-related programme in their final year.

The extra-curriculum programme of enrichment is outstanding. The sixth form is good, rather than outstanding, because of the current lack of flexibility for some students for whom a combination of academic and vocational pathways would best meet their needs. The school is working with local providers to try to improve this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

These aspects are outstanding because, from the headteacher through to support staff, everyone is committed to ensuring youngsters succeed, both academically and socially. Students with learning difficulties or disabilities are personally supported with detailed plans and good tracking of their progress, and achieve very well. Students feel safe here, know their future academic targets, and marking of key pieces of work is informative. Students are all confident of help if they find work a challenge, and the school provides every opportunity for review and revision in breaks and after school. Progress into the sixth form or to other colleges or training is carefully planned and good advice given. Because the working ethos of the school and its sixth form is so motivating and enjoyable, it is understandable that a few students choose to stay on to study academic options despite there being, in hindsight, more appropriate pathways available elsewhere.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The leadership of the headteacher and his team of senior and middle managers is outstanding, because they are all empowered to act quickly to respond to any shortfalls in provision. There is a strong sense of accountability and responsibility at all levels, with all staff wanting to sustain the positive working atmosphere. One colleague commented that 'it is very rare to hear raised voices'; a calm, purposeful ethos is apparent both in lessons and in break-times.

Regular surveys of students and parents keep the school very well informed of views, and it responds quickly in the best interest of pupils, subject to resources. Governors are close to the key aspects of the school through a system of link governors. Their oversight of and care for the staff and students through a recent tragedy is consistent with the school's inclusive philosophy. The school site is large and complex, with excellent community drama and sports facilities available to the school. The school organisation is superbly orchestrated, because everyone knows their role in making a difference. The evaluation of strengths and areas for development is generally accurate, if at times too modest.

The development plans, however, do not set clear enough success criteria in terms of student achievement. Fortunately, any negative impact of this is offset by the culture of frequent review and development.

The school meets the requirements for student safeguarding. Finances are well managed; the school has made good use of extra resources as part of its specialist school status to widen students' cultural horizons and spread modern teaching technology to many classrooms. The school has solved the single issue from the previous inspection, and is continuing to demonstrate its excellent capacity to improve.

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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?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1	
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	2	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	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
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?	1	2
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	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
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	1	
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 your positive contributions during our visit to your school yesterday. You clearly know your school well, and are rightly proud of its outstanding provision for your education.

You are fortunate in being able to enjoy attending an excellent school. Students achieve exceptionally well, whatever their natural talents, interests and abilities. In addition, most of you take part enthusiastically in a very rich programme of extra activities, such as sports and arts clubs, trips, and overseas visits. The key strength of the school is the dedication of your headteacher, and every member of the staff, to ensuring your success. They dedicate a considerable amount of skilled effort above and beyond the call of duty on your behalf. 'Wise teachers make learning a joy', according to Proverbs, and your teachers enjoy working here as much as you enjoy learning. Because you have such good teaching, good opportunities to develop responsibilities, and in turn do your part by behaving well and working hard, you are thriving in your education and are very well prepared for your future well-being.

One point for the school to develop is the criteria they use to judge the success of new developments and courses; we think these should refer to student performance indicators. We also hope that improvements in working links with other local post-16 providers should make it easier to follow courses that allow a mixture of academic and vocational subjects.