

# The Hayesbrook School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118927
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	313154
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Long HMI

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>	Modern (non-selective)
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	760
6th form	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Daker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nigel Blackburn / Debbie Coslett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Brook Street Tonbridge TN9 2PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01732 500600
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: • achievement and the quality of the curriculum in the sixth form • the impact of the school's work to raise achievement in English in Years 7 to 11 • the progress made by able students • the quality of monitoring and evaluation in identifying and tackling underachievement. Evidence was gathered from interviews with staff and students, lesson observations and analysis of documents including parents' and carers' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Hayesbrook is smaller than most secondary schools and is part of a loose federation with a large group of other schools in its area. The school is jointly led by two headteachers who are both National Leaders of Education. The school is a National Support School. The majority of students are White British and few live in favourable socio-economic circumstances. A higher than average proportion have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, most notably moderate learning difficulties or specific difficulties such as dyslexia. Around a third of secondary students in the area go to selective grammar schools. The Department for Children, Schools and Families has identified the school as a high performing specialist school and it is one of a very small number with specialist status in three areas: sport, the applied learning specialism, and as a training school offering professional development for new and serving teachers. The school has very many awards in areas such as sport, the arts and health. Sixth form provision involves collaboration with a nearby girls' school and some vocational courses are run with a neighbouring college of further education.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Hayesbrook is an outstanding school from which students leave as very well adjusted young men. Parents are highly supportive of the inclusive nature of the school, as typified by this comment: 'All students are made to feel special and important and this says a lot about the school. Both of my sons are doing very well and are happy, confident and proud members of Hayesbrook.' The school has a strong legacy of improvement, particularly through its specialist status and the range of partnership work undertaken with other institutions to broaden the curriculum and improve students' achievement.

Students arrive with below average attainment. This has fallen in recent years with literacy skills particularly low and few students exceeding the expected levels in mathematics, English and science in Year 6 tests. However, achievement during the first three years at Hayesbrook is excellent. Results in the most recent national tests in Year 9 were in line with those seen nationally in mathematics and science. Results in English were, unusually, lower by comparison and effective action has been taken to sharpen teaching so that progress is again in line with other subjects.

In Years 10 and 11, students continue to make excellent progress. The proportion gaining five or more good GCSE passes, including mathematics and English, is above average. The students' overall attainment, including on vocational courses, where progress is excellent, is above that seen nationally. As in Years 7 to 9, achievement in English faltered in last year's GCSE examinations but here, too, has been remedied.

Strengths in the students' academic achievement are supported by their excellent personal development and sense of well-being. The quality of care and support provided leads to rapid gains in self-confidence, in their enjoyment of school and in their attitudes to learning. Attendance is exceptionally high. Behaviour and relationships are outstanding, both between students and with staff, and the large majority of students demonstrate excellent moral and social development. They reflect sensibly on complex issues. The students make an excellent contribution to the community within and beyond school. They are keen to take on responsibilities and raise money for charities, and participate in activities in large numbers.

The students feel very safe and know they can turn to adults for help. Any bullying is, in the words of one student, 'taken very seriously here' and dealt with. Vulnerable students are identified carefully on entry and within the school. Outstanding monitoring and support both internally and with external agencies means these students make excellent progress in personal and academic areas. Students with learning difficulties associated with their behaviour are supported very well. They make excellent progress in improving their behaviour so they can learn properly. A sixth form student, excluded from his previous school, reflected that on joining Hayesbrook in Year 10 his attitude had been transformed because 'they got me involved in things like leadership'.

Teaching and learning are excellent, largely because staff expect students to aim high and this rubs off on the students. The staff know the students well and enjoy working with them. Lessons consistently challenge students to do their best because assessment information is used effectively to plan learning. Much visual material is used, learning is often made active through discussion or practical exploration and regular use is made of information and communication technology. The students like this and respond well. Students' progress toward exacting targets is tracked carefully. Intervention is effective where there are concerns, and parents and carers

are kept well informed. Support for students with additional educational needs, such as dyslexia or autistic spectrum disorder, is a strength of the school. Very effective coordination of work by well trained specialist staff and subject teachers means these students are fully included and make excellent progress.

Academic guidance and feedback is excellent through teachers' marking and discussion. Students are encouraged to assess work themselves and progress very well in learning to do this, even though some find it a challenge. They know what their targets are and what to do to reach them. Guidance on course options and careers is clear and effective.

The excellent curriculum has seen much development in recent years; it is carefully adapted to the students' needs and the school's location. Arrangements for transition into the school are excellent and valued by parents and carers. Progression and challenge are provided for all through different 'pathways' which support academic and personal development. The curriculum is constantly reviewed, for example, it has been adapted this year to stretch and engage the more able students. Work-related and enterprise learning is covered comprehensively and underpins students' good level of readiness for future employment.

Specialist status makes a very strong impact on students' achievement and enjoyment. Specialist sport activity is embedded and is a highlight of the curriculum. It is central to much of the school's work with the local community, including other schools. It makes an excellent contribution to students' wider personal development as well as to specific areas such as understanding how to lead a healthy and active life. The more recently acquired applied learning specialism has broadened the curriculum for all ages and is proving popular with students and appropriate to their needs.

Extra-curricular provision is exceptionally broad, as is students' participation in it. Activities are both enjoyable and support learning. Although sport plays a strong role, other areas of learning are well represented. Students have extensive opportunities to experience global culture through the school's international dimension, including through visits. The students' understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of this country is covered well in the curriculum; nevertheless, they have relatively limited contact with people in more ethnically diverse areas of the country.

Excellent leadership and management are characterised by a senior team with a shared vision. The headteachers work very well together in an arrangement that gives them time to lead the school at the same time as being involved in external initiatives and consultancy work from which they bring back best practice. Others in positions of responsibility fulfil their roles very effectively. Much of the school's extensive partnership work derives from empowering all leaders to get involved in delivering training for other schools or participating in initiatives. Strategic planning is detailed and responsive to external pressures, such as curricular changes, as well as internal needs arising from monitoring the school's work. The school knows itself very well because a wide range of evidence is used to identify improvement priorities and ensure best use is made of resources. Action to remedy weakness is swift and the school sets and achieves challenging targets in relation to students' academic and personal progress. The governors are strongly committed to the school; they monitor it closely and challenge with vigour if they have concerns.

Staff development is a strength. In an area where recruitment can be difficult, the school makes full use of its training status to foster strong teaching. The nurturing of young leaders is also a notable feature of the school. Because of this, as much as its track record of success, the school has excellent capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The sixth form is good, with strengths in students' personal development and in the quality of the curriculum and the care provided for them. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average because not all of the more able students stay on at the school. They make excellent progress on vocational courses such as BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) courses in sport or business studies, where standards are above average. Progress on A-level courses is good, although there are some variations between subjects and standards are average overall.

As in the main school, the students' personal development is outstanding. They make a very strong contribution to the school community, acting as role models and mentors for younger students. They make excellent ambassadors for the school and are enthusiastic in leading activities, for example, through the sports leadership course. Their personal and academic progress means they are well prepared for later life. Support and guidance for the students are of high quality. Staff know the students well and provide excellent individual tutoring. Students value the mutually respectful relationships they have with staff. Their progress is monitored closely and excellent guidance is given to those needing more help.

Teaching and learning are good overall and sometimes excellent. The majority of lessons are well prepared to meet students' individual needs. Examples of very strong teaching and learning often occur on vocational courses. In these lessons, students work purposefully because they understand how tasks fit into the wider scheme of work and how they are assessed. AS- and A-level teaching and learning are good but less effective because they do not consistently develop the independent learning skills which students need on these courses.

The sixth form curriculum is excellent. It is inclusive, having been broadened in recent years through work with the partner school to include a much wider range of vocational options as well as more AS and A levels. The students respond well to the curriculum. They are staying on in increasing numbers and enjoy working alongside girls in the sixth form. Sport is again a strong and valued feature of the curriculum.

Leadership and management of the sixth form have improved and are outstanding and this has made a significant impact on the wider curriculum and rising academic standards. Monitoring and evaluation give the sixth form leader a clear picture of priorities for development and coordination with partner institutions has become a strength.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching in the sixth form, especially on AS- and A-level courses, consistently develops students' independent learning skills.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	2
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	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The attendance of learners	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

<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>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The Hayesbrook School, Tonbridge, TN9 2PH

This letter is to explain the findings from the school's recent inspection and to thank those of you who talked to me for your help during my visit. However I would urge you to read the full report as well.

The quality of education and care is outstanding in the main school and good in the sixth form. These are the other things I found:

- Academic progress is excellent in the main school and you reach above average standards by the end of Year 11. Achievement in the sixth form is good overall but excellent on the BTEC courses.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. You told me, and your parents and carers agree, that most of you thoroughly enjoy school and feel safe and well cared for. This is shown by your excellent attendance and is an important factor in supporting your academic achievement.
- The contribution you make to the school and its community is a strong feature of life at Hayesbrook. Sixth form students play an exceptional role here, acting as role models and leaders for younger students.
- The curriculum is excellent. In particular, the school's specialist status for sport is an important part of the curriculum and one which you told me you welcomed and were proud of. Extra-curricular activities are also very good, and not just in the sport area.
- Teaching is excellent in the main school and good in the sixth form. The staff know you well and plan lessons which meet your needs and which you enjoy.
- Your progress is checked carefully and those of you who need more help to learn or behave better are given it quickly.
- Led by the two headteachers, staff work very well as a team to check the school's work and make improvements where needed. They have high expectations of all of you and work very hard to help you achieve all you can.

Although the school is outstanding overall, I have asked those in charge to make sure that the development plans for the sixth form focus on making teaching consistently effective in helping students become more independent in their learning.

You can help by continuing to work hard and making the most of your time while you are at the school. Thank you again and good luck to those of you with examinations this summer.

Stephen Long Her Majesty's Inspector