

Shepshed High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120257
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313567
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	10–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	531
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Bell-Young
Headteacher	Adrian Stephenson
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	Forest Street Shepshed Loughborough LE12 9DA
Telephone number	01509 502112
Fax number	01509 601113

Age group	10-14
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspection number	313567

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and achievement in 2007 and the consistency of monitoring at all levels. The inspector collected evidence from lesson observations, assessment data, documentation and meetings with key staff, governors and students. 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school when compared with 11-16 schools nationally. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. A few are from minority ethnic groups and all speak English fluently. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of students identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational need, is above average. The school moved into its new premises in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good quality of education for its students. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide a very clear vision, and this is shared by all staff. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say that their children enjoy school and they make good progress because the teaching is good. One parent's comment reflects the view of many others: 'It is nice for my child to come home smiling at the end of each day and want to go back the next day'.

Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average. In the relatively short time that the students spend in Year 6 before they take national tests, they make satisfactory progress, although standards remain below recent national averages in mathematics and science. By the end of Year 9, students' attain standards that are average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. In mathematics and science, this represents good progress, and in English students' progress is outstanding. The school recognises that standards could be even better by the end of Years 6 and 9, particularly at the higher levels. The school is taking suitable action, for example through the focused use of information and communication technology (ICT) in mathematics. However, the results of the national tests do not yet demonstrate the impact of the school's actions. Students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the school's effective provision. Parents are rightly very complimentary about the school's personal and academic care and support for students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school takes good care of its students. As a result, students' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. They are proud of their new school and enjoy the challenges set for them. Their consistently good rates of attendance also reflect their sense of achievement and enjoyment. Students say they feel safe, happy and secure in school. They also report that if there are any incidents of bullying, they feel confident to talk to adults. The few reported incidents are dealt with effectively and quickly. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are robust and staff are aware of their responsibilities. Students understand the importance of eating healthily and many adopt healthy lifestyles. 'It helps you to learn better!' is a comment made by many to the inspector. The school offers a good curriculum that meets the needs of students well. The provision enables students to make a positive contribution to the local, and the wider global, community, through, for example, the school's links with Ethiopia. Students particularly enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sport and other extra-curricular activities that enhance the good curriculum they experience. The school council members are active and students feel that its work makes a real difference to the quality of life in school. In lessons, and in other aspects of the school, students show a good sense of responsibility and are prepared well for their future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Across the school, there is a strong emphasis on identifying precisely what students will learn. Senior leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning so that it is good. Typically, lessons are geared well to match students' needs and there is a good range of activities to stimulate their interest. For example, an analysis of students' attainment identified that the gap in boys' performance was much greater than that found nationally between boys and girls. Teaching strategies aimed at engaging boys more in learning has resulted in successfully reducing this gap. Good tracking systems ensure that assessment is thorough and informs teachers' planning. Teachers set clear targets

for students and review their progress regularly. This process involves teachers and staff with pastoral responsibilities, as well as parents and students themselves. As a result, barriers to effective learning are identified quickly and action taken is increasingly leading to successful outcomes. Students receive good guidance on how to improve their academic performance and, in the best examples, rigorous follow up by teachers ensures that improvements are sustained. The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good and the senior leaders work effectively as a team. One of the school's strengths is the way that senior staff and governors keep a very close check on the school's work. Subject leaders and staff at all levels respond positively to the senior leadership team's high expectations. Managers at all levels have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. This ensures that they set challenging targets. The majority of students meet these targets and some exceed them because the monitoring and tracking of students' progress is rigorous. There is a strong culture of review in the school and improvement planning takes account of the views of parents and students. There are good links with local schools and support agencies to ensure that students experience minimal disruption at the point of transition in Years 5 and 10. The school is good at evaluating its performance and it provides good value for money. The school has good capacity for further improvement because it has successfully tackled the issues from the previous inspection and has identified the right priorities to build further on its successes in a new learning environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and science across the school so that many more students reach higher levels of attainment.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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
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

Dear Students

Inspection of Shepshed High School, Shepshed, LE12 9DA

As you know, I recently inspected your school and this letter summarises the results of the inspection. However, first, I would like to thank you for your cooperation during the visit. I was very impressed with those of you I met and valued your comments. You represented your school extremely well.

The inspection found that your school is good. It is very well led by the headteacher and staff work well together. This means that you make good progress in mathematics and science by the time you leave in Year 9. In English, your progress is outstanding. It is not surprising therefore that you enjoy coming to school and learning. The great majority of you behave well and care for, and support, each other. Your teachers know you very well, care for your welfare and progress, and provide good teaching. You are aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives. As many of you said to me, in response to my question about why it is important to lead healthy lives, 'It helps you to learn better!' Many of you are involved in team sports, including girls' football and rugby, and you value the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to you. You show responsibility through the many opportunities the school provides, including through the work of the school council, which you feel makes a real difference to the quality of life you experience at school.

Although you make good progress overall, the headteacher and senior staff agree with me that standards could be higher in mathematics and science, to match those attained in English. I have asked for improvement so that you attain even higher levels in these subjects. You can play your part by giving helpful feedback to teachers and asking how you could do better.

I wish you all the best and hope that you continue to enjoy life in your new school.

Yours faithfully

Dilip Kadodwala Her Majesty's Inspector

11 October 2007



Dear Students

Inspection of Shepshed High School, Shepshed, LE12 9DA

As you know, I recently inspected your school and this letter summarises the results of the inspection. However, first, I would like to thank you for your cooperation during the visit. I was very impressed with those of you I met and valued your comments. You represented your school extremely well.

The inspection found that your school is good. It is very well led by the headteacher and staff work well together. This means that you make good progress in mathematics and science by the time you leave in Year 9. In English, your progress is outstanding. It is not surprising therefore that you enjoy coming to school and learning. The great majority of you behave well and care for, and support, each other. Your teachers know you very well, care for your welfare and progress, and provide good teaching. You are aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives. As many of you said to me, in response to my question about why it is important to lead healthy lives, 'It helps you to learn better!' Many of you are involved in team sports, including girls' football and rugby, and you value the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to you. You show responsibility through the many opportunities the school provides, including through the work of the school council, which you feel makes a real difference to the quality of life you experience at school.

Although you make good progress overall, the headteacher and senior staff agree with me that standards could be higher in mathematics and science, to match those attained in English. I have asked for improvement so that you attain even higher levels in these subjects. You can play your part by giving helpful feedback to teachers and asking how you could do better.

I wish you all the best and hope that you continue to enjoy life in your new school.

Yours faithfully

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector