

Hazelwick School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126070
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315418
Inspection date	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	David Butler 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1892
Sixth form	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Parsons
Headteacher	Gordon M W Parry
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2004
School address	Hazelwick Mill Lane Three Bridges Crawley RH10 1SX
Telephone number	01293 403344
Fax number	01293 442854

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the support provided for vulnerable learners and for gifted and talented students; aspects of students' personal development and well-being; and the monitoring of teaching and learning. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, assessment data, parents' questionnaires, planning documents, observation of lessons, and interviews with staff, students and the chair of governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but inspectors 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

Hazelwick School is a large comprehensive school that draws its students from Crawley and the surrounding area. Around a third of students come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with the great majority being fluent in English. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has a unit for students who are hearing impaired which, at the time of the inspection, had four students on roll. The school has had a specialism in technology since 1998 and a second specialism in the humanities since 2006. It is part of a consortium arrangement for post-16 education with other Crawley schools and a 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

Hazelwick School has made very good progress since it was last inspected and now provides outstanding education and care for its students, including those in its sixth form. This has been achieved through excellent leadership and management and the work of a highly dedicated staff who are prepared to 'go the extra mile' in meeting students' individual needs. An extremely positive ethos, based on helping all students do their best, both academically and socially, permeates the school. Students are very polite, friendly and welcoming. They are rightly immensely proud of their school. Their enjoyment of education is reflected in their high level of attendance, excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between students and the way in which they care for each other are impressive. Year 7 students spoke very warmly about how their sixth form mentors had helped them settle in when they first joined the school. Students value highly the individual support they receive from staff. As one student with learning difficulties said, 'Hazelwick does its best for you, even when you don't find things easy.' A large number of responses to the parents' questionnaire were received and the overwhelming majority of these were very positive. Several parents wrote to say how appreciative they were of the school's help and support when their child or family experienced difficulties.

Students enter the school with around average levels of attainment. They attain examination results by the end of Year 11 and in the sixth form that are well above national averages. This represents excellent progress and achievement. Unconfirmed data for 2008 show that almost 70% of students in Year 11 attained five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including both English and mathematics, and nearly all got at least five GCSE passes at grades A* to G. These achievements are well above expectations and the school's data on students currently in Year 11 show they are making excellent progress towards achieving their appropriately challenging targets. No specific group of students underachieves but the potentially highest attaining students are not always getting the top grades in both GCSE and A-level examinations of which they are capable. The school has identified this and is taking steps to address it. Students with learning difficulties make excellent progress and students with disabilities generally achieve well because of the high quality support they receive. The small numbers of looked after children and students who are not fluent in English also generally achieve well.

Students' outstanding achievement is due to consistently good teaching and the excellent care and support they receive throughout the school. Their progress is very carefully monitored and early interventions are made when there are any signs of underachievement. Students are well aware of their individual targets and are given very practical ways of raising their achievement, for example through on-line learning programmes and attending additional support sessions. Students find their teachers and other staff very approachable when they seek help in overcoming any academic or personal problems they face. Classroom relationships are excellent and students respond well to the tasks they are set. However, in some lessons, teachers need to take greater risks in encouraging students to take more responsibility for their own learning, develop independent learning skills and pose their own questions. Managers have identified many examples of outstanding teaching and strategies are in place, including the imaginative use of information and communication technology (ICT), to share these more widely. Much has been done since the last inspection to broaden the curriculum to meet the needs of all students in Years 10 and 11. This has been successfully achieved through the addition of more practical and applied subjects, brought about partly as a result of the school's specialism in

technology. Vocational courses, provided in conjunction with the local college of further education, are proving very popular and are valued highly by students. The provision for gifted and talented students has also been extended, for example through an AS-level course in critical thinking skills. Much has also been done to improve ICT facilities and the school has an excellent new learning resource centre. The humanities specialism is still at an early stage of development but is helping to enrich the curriculum. There is a very good take-up of the excellent range of sporting and cultural activities provided at lunchtimes and after school.

Students' personal development and well-being are promoted extremely effectively through the curriculum and through the exceptionally high quality care, guidance and support they receive. Students feel extremely safe and are confident that the rare incidents of bullying, racial and other forms of harassment are dealt with promptly and effectively. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school during the inspection was exemplary. They are very actively involved in the life of the school, for example through the work of the school council and organising a very wide range of events, often to raise money for charities. Students are involved in the appointment of senior staff and contribute to the evaluation of subjects. They are very aware of how to lead safe and healthy lives and where to seek help. The pastoral team, including professionally trained counsellors, provides expert support for students and their families experiencing personal difficulties. Students also benefit from the excellent relationships the school has developed with external agencies to support their welfare. They are well prepared for their futures through the programme of work-related learning and there are plans in place to enhance this further.

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the school. They set very clear direction and do much to encourage staff to improve their practice. They are very well supported by other managers and members of staff. Effective and efficient use is made of resources, including those provided for the specialisms, and the school provides very good value for money. The school makes a substantial contribution to promoting community cohesion through its work in developing cultural understanding amongst its students and the support it provides for primary schools and local organisations. The school is seeking ways of developing this further in the light of the findings from its audit of local community needs.

Managers have demonstrated that they are highly effective at bringing about improvements. A much more rigorous programme of curriculum reviews, including more frequent monitoring of teaching and learning, has been put in place. This has made a significant impact, for example in improving performance in science. Data are being used more effectively to improve learning and raise achievement. Substantial improvements have been made to the curriculum. The school is making excellent progress towards meeting or exceeding its challenging targets. This impressive record of success indicates that the school is very strongly placed to continue to move forward.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Provision in the school's large sixth form focuses mainly on A-level courses, where students are offered a very good range of subjects. Other courses are available through the consortium arrangements but take-up so far has been very small, despite the coordination of timetables. Students make outstanding progress in relation to their prior attainment because of very good teaching and the excellent support they receive. Students are carefully matched to courses and the proportion successfully completing their courses and gaining qualifications is very high,

with most going on to higher education. Even though over half of passes in A-level examinations are at grades A and B, the school feels there is scope for improving this further. Students spoke very highly of the excellent care, guidance and support they receive to help them achieve their best. Their personal development is excellent and they are very well prepared for adult life. They play a very full part in the life of the school through supporting younger students and organising social, cultural and fund-raising events. They provide excellent role models for students in the main school. The sixth form is extremely well led and managed. Students' progress is very carefully monitored and they and their parents are provided with frequent reports on how well they are achieving in relation to their targets.

What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage teachers to take more risks to enable students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, develop independent learning skills and pose their own questions.

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	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	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 December 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Hazelwick School, Crawley, RH10 1SX

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us with the recent inspection of your school. I would like to share some of our findings with you.

We think your school provides you with an outstanding standard of education and care and you are right to be immensely proud of it. We have come to this view because of the excellent progress you make, both in your academic work and in your personal development. This is because you are very well taught and you receive excellent care, guidance and support. We were extremely impressed by the way in which you get on so well together and support one another. We found you very polite and friendly and your behaviour in lessons and around the school during our visit was exemplary. The great majority of you enjoy school and this is shown by your excellent attendance and very positive attitudes to learning. You told us that you feel very safe and secure in school and know where to go to get help if you experience difficulties. You value the excellent choice of courses you are given in Years 10 and 11, including those provided at the college. Many of you also told us how much you enjoyed attending the very wide range of activities provided for you at lunchtimes and after school. We were impressed by the work of the student council and the many other ways you take on responsibilities, organise activities and raise money for charity.

Your teachers are extremely hard working and dedicated to doing their best to help you succeed. Your school has improved a great deal since it was last inspected because of the excellent leadership and management of your headteacher, governors and other members of staff. However, we feel some lessons would be even better if more teachers gave you greater responsibility for your own learning and helped you to develop the skills to work independently and pose your own questions.

We feel your school is fully capable of making this and other improvements. I hope you will play your part in this and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Butler

Her Majesty's Inspector