

# Hodge Hill School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103503
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	319403
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Rzeznik 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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Malcolm Sparkes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marie McMahon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 1999
<b>School address</b>	Bromford Road Hodge Hill Birmingham B36 8HB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4647500
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 6847517

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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four Additional Inspectors. When the college was inspected in January 2007, it was judged to require significant improvement so was given a Notice to Improve. Standards in mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 were not high enough and students underachieved in mathematics across Years 10 and 11. Teaching and learning were judged to be inadequate. An Additional Inspector monitored the progress made on each of these issues in November 2007.

## Description of the school

Hodge Hill is larger than average and has undergone a change of name since its last inspection. In September 2007, the college gained specialist status for sports and enterprise and changed its name to reflect this designation. There are nearly twice as many boys as girls, primarily because the college shares its site with a single-sex girls' school. The college also shares premises with a school for the deaf and the students from this school participate in physical education lessons (PE) and some courses in Years 10 and 11. The number claiming free school meals is high because the college is located in an area of social and economic disadvantage. Around two thirds of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage whose first language is not English is high. However, very few are at the early stages of acquiring English, although the proportion is increasing. Around 50% of students are of Asian origin, mainly from Pakistani backgrounds. A third is White British and a small percentage is Black, of mixed heritage or looked after. Demographic changes in the locality are leading to increasing numbers of Asian students being admitted. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is average.

In September 2006, the college entered into a partnership with another local college to provide post-16 courses in a limited number of subjects. The governing body does not manage the provision, although some staff teach the courses. There has been a very large turnover of teachers in the past two years. The change has arisen because of an increase in the college roll, staff promotions and departures. There has also been a significant change in the senior leadership team, with two new deputy headteachers and two assistant headteachers appointed in the past year. The college has gained a Quality Mark and a Leading Aspect award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with Section 13 (5) the education act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the college no longer requires significant improvement. The overall effectiveness of the school is now satisfactory. Inspectors agree with the leadership's view that the college provides a satisfactory standard of education and has some good features. Improved curriculum provision, more effective teaching and better leadership in both subjects have brought about rising standards, particularly in mathematics and science.

The college is effectively led and managed and is well placed to improve further. The headteacher and senior staff have been relentless and very successful in eradicating inadequate teaching. Effective intervention has largely eliminated unsatisfactory teaching and there is much more good teaching than a year ago. The quality of teaching ranges from outstanding to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Nevertheless, the variation is too wide. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or better, it is mainly because insufficient use is made of assessment information to ensure work is properly matched to students' differing capabilities. Some teachers successfully encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, but this is not common. Students are good at working independently but in the main undertake activities prescribed by teachers. Leaders are rightly aiming to make learning more personalised by adjusting their teaching to better cater for students' individual needs and interests and by engaging them more in what and how they learn.

Achievement is satisfactory, but it is inconsistent within subjects and across years. For example, in the last academic year students' progress between Years 7 and 9 was satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. Their progress between Years 10 and 11 was exceptional overall. However, there was unevenness in the progress made by the older students. They made good progress in English and inadequate progress in mathematics. Students' current progress between Years 7 and 9 is at least satisfactory and remains good or better in Years 10 and 11. Students' progress in mathematics is now satisfactory across the school because teaching is more effective and the curriculum better meets their needs.

In 2007, standards at the end of Year 11 were broadly average overall. An above average percentage of students achieved five or more A\* - C GCSE grades or their equivalent. However, the percentage achieving the higher grades in English and mathematics was significantly below average. There was a marked difference in the standards achieved in both subjects. In English 45% of students gained a higher grade, but in mathematics the figure was too low at 25%. High standards in vocational subjects have raised the overall pass rates at GCSE very significantly. In 2007, standards at the end of Year 9 were exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. Current data shows that standards in Year 9 will rise. However, the legacy of past underachievement in these subjects means that standards are not as high as they should be. Whilst standards are also rising in Year 11, leaders recognise that the numbers gaining the higher (A\* - C) and very top (A\* and A) GCSE grades in mathematics and science are not yet high enough.

Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Students have a sound understanding of faiths and lifestyles different from their own. However, opportunities to reflect and explore the bigger questions about the meaning and wonders of life are often missed. Acts of collective worship are not held on a daily basis.

Students enjoy college life and are keen to learn and do well. Their behaviour is good. Relationships between staff and students and between students themselves are good. Racial harmony and tolerance are key strengths. Attendance has steadily improved and is broadly average. Punctuality to lessons and morning arrival is much better and is satisfactory overall. The curriculum is good. Students say that they are benefiting greatly from the wide range of vocational courses. Provision is helping them gain the necessary skills for future employment. Students are well cared for and they now receive a good range of academic support and guidance.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards and accelerate students' progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9, and increase the proportion of students gaining the higher and top GCSE grades, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by better using assessment information to ensure work is effectively matched to students' capabilities and encourage students to take more responsibility for what and how they learn.
- Ensure there is a daily act of collective worship.

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**

Students' achievement as a whole is satisfactory, but with some variation. Between Years 7 and 9 progress is now at least satisfactory with a significant proportion making good gains in their learning. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good overall and is at least satisfactory in mathematics. The progress made by students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is no different from that made by their peers in each phase. There are no gender variations in students' performance.

Standards at the end of Year 11 have risen sharply. The number of students gaining a higher grade in English has improved from 21% in 2003 to 45% in 2007. The percentage reaching the same level in mathematics rose from 18% in 2006 to 25% in 2007. Data indicate there will be a further rise in mathematics to 39% in 2008. The proportion of students gaining an A\*- G GCSE grade in mathematics rose by 16% to 83% in 2007, which indicates the less able are performing better in the subject. High examination results in subjects such as art, business studies, PE and information and communication technology (ICT) have also helped raise standards significantly in Year 11.

In 2007, the percentage of Year 9 students reaching Level 5 or above rose by 2% in mathematics and 5% in science, to 57% and 47% respectively. At the higher Level 6 or above, mathematics saw no change from the previous year, but science saw a 4% rise to 14% of students achieving this level. This said, the best Level 6 figures are in mathematics. Standards in all three subjects are predicted to rise significantly this academic year and 2008 results will be above the national floor target set at the end of each phase.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Students say that they feel safe and secure and are not bullied. There is good provision and participation in sports and other extra-curricular activities, which ensure students keep fit by taking regular exercise. However, data shows that around 10% do not fully understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and a significant minority do not choose to eat healthy options at lunchtime. The active student council makes a valuable contribution, for instance, in instigating the anti-bullying campaign and setting up a 'safe house' for those who are vulnerable. The 'Student Voice' forum meets frequently and students feel that their voice is heard and they can influence decisions directly affecting them. The strong vocational programme prepares students well for the world of work. Through its enterprise programme the college offers a wide range of activities, including 'pop star' conferences, to successfully promote and further develop students' employment skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Good or better teaching is characterised by high expectations and demanding work that stretches students' capabilities to the full. Where activities and teaching methods engage students' interest, they make rapid progress in lessons and over time. In the mathematics and science lessons observed, the quality of teaching varied. Where teaching was less effective it was mainly because assessment information was not used well enough to pitch work at the right level. On occasions the most able students were not sufficiently challenged due to recapping of concepts that they already knew rather than being required to gain new knowledge and skills.

Students with specific learning difficulties get appropriate support from teaching assistants to ensure that they can access provision and achieve the learning objectives. Teachers mark and assess work regularly. They provide good feedback on how well individuals are performing. As a result, students are clear about their levels of attainment and what must be further improved. Whilst there are examples of students taking responsibility for their own learning, for instance, by using ICT for mathematics homework, they are insufficiently involved in determining the direction of their learning.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 2

An effective curriculum is one of the main drivers that are helping improve standards. The gaining of sports specialist status and the higher profile of PE has really made a difference to students' outlook and performance, not only in PE, but in other subjects too. Success in sports has boosted students' self-belief and self-confidence, particularly those of boys. In PE lessons, students are effectively engaged, highly motivated and keen to do well. These qualities carry into other areas of learning, with success in one subject breeding success elsewhere. The revised mathematics curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is better meeting students' needs. Students say they like learning concepts in themes and report that now work is organised into manageable 'chunks', they can handle it better. Leaders recognise that provision is not yet fully stretching all students, particularly the more able, to ensure the higher and top GCSE grades are achieved. The vocational curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is very good. There is a high uptake on courses

of this kind, with all students taking at least one vocational option. Students value work-related activities because they are developing the necessary personal, economic and industrial skills necessary for adult life. Enterprise days increase students' awareness of the business world and help build their confidence and resilience and improve their team working skills. The college works productively with partner primary and secondary schools, for example, through the junior sports leader qualification and by the provision of enterprise teaching support packs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' welfare, health and safety are good. Leaders have implemented effective strategies to manage students' behaviour and this means there is a calm and disciplined environment in which to teach and learn. Attendance has improved because innovative measures, such as text messages on parents' mobiles and calls home from behaviour coordinators, have had a positive impact. Students receive good advice to ensure that they choose the courses that best suit their needs and aspirations. Students are now well informed about the progress they are making. Students know the level they are working at and what they must do to achieve their targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher is dynamic and is passionate about improving the quality of provision and the life chances of the students. She understands that a good education is a passport to a better life and that qualifications open doors that would otherwise remain closed.

Senior leaders, middle managers and governors work well as a team to ensure the college is moving in the right direction and its aims are achieved.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses because self-evaluation procedures are good. The school invests heavily in its staff. Effective professional development has increased teachers' subject expertise and improved teaching skills to the position where unsatisfactory teaching is rare and good teaching occurs in over half the lessons observed by senior staff. The college has been successful in recruiting specialists in a range of subjects. Newcomers say induction procedures are good and this enables them to give of their best quickly. The college has successfully recruited staff, at both junior and senior level, from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. It gives the right message to students, parents and the community at large that the college is serious about promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Governors are very supportive and have ensured that all but one of the statutory duties are met. Acts of collective worship are not held daily.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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?	3
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

<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>	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**

22 February 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Hodge Hill Sports and Enterprise College, Birmingham B36 8HB

- As you know, inspectors visited your college recently. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found out. We enjoyed meeting you and appreciated your comments and opinions. We welcomed your friendliness, politeness and honesty when answering our questions. Inspectors agree with the leadership's own view that the college provides a satisfactory standard of education and has some good features. These are the things we found out about your college.
- You enjoy college life, are keen to learn and behave well.
- Most of you attend regularly, although there is a small minority who do not attend regularly enough.
- You are making good or better progress in Years 10 and 11 and at least satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9; standards are rising at the end of each phase.
- Results in vocational subjects are helping to boost the Year 11 examination pass rate.
- Teaching is satisfactory or better; there is much more good teaching than 12 months ago.
- The curriculum is good overall and the new curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11 are very good; all of you are taking at least one vocational course and you say you value work-related learning activities.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors are providing good leadership to improve provision so you can succeed; inadequate teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics, no longer exists.
- Sports and enterprise status is making a difference; provision helps to boost your self-confidence and self-esteem. The college must do three things to improve further.
- Raise standards and improve your progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9, and increase the numbers gaining the higher (A\*– C) and top (A\* and A) grades at GCSE, particular in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by better using assessment information to ensure work is closely matched to your needs and abilities; we want teachers to encourage you to take more responsibility for what and how you learn.
- A daily act of collective worship must be held.

Best Wishes David Rzeznik Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools

**Annex B**

22 February 2008

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Birmingham B36 8HB**

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**These are the things we found out about your college.**

- You enjoy college life, are keen to learn and behave well.
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- You are making good or better progress in Years 10 and 11 and at least satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9; standards are rising at the end of each phase.
- Results in vocational subjects are helping to boost the Year 11 examination pass rate.
- Teaching is satisfactory or better; there is much more good teaching than 12 months ago.
- The curriculum is good overall and the new curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11 are very good; all of you are taking at least one vocational course and you say you value work-related learning activities.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors are providing good leadership to improve provision so you can succeed; inadequate teaching and learning, particularly in mathematics, no longer exists.
- Sports and enterprise status is making a difference; provision helps to boost your self-confidence and self-esteem.

**The college must do three things to improve further.**

- Raise standards and improve your progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9, and increase the numbers gaining the higher (A\*- C) and top (A\* and A) grades at GCSE, particular in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by better using assessment information to ensure work is closely matched to your needs and abilities; we want teachers to encourage you to take more responsibility for what and how you learn.
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Best Wishes

David Rzeznik

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools