

The Warwick School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125268
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	319534
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Ramesh Kapadia HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1078
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Ernest Shannon
Headteacher	Mr Ronald Searle
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
School address	Noke Drive Redhill RH1 4AD
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Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three Additional Inspectors, led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Warwick is a large mixed comprehensive school in the centre of Redhill, with more boys than girls. It has been designated as a specialist college for mathematics, science and technology for ten years and became a vocational lead school in 2006. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average but higher than other parts of Surrey. A relatively high percentage of pupils have learning difficulties: a significant number have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The majority of pupils are of British White origin, with small numbers from various ethnic minorities. At the last inspection, the school was given a Notice to Improve.

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) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The Warwick School was given a Notice to Improve in February 2007, with four key issues to address. There had been a steady decline in standards of achievement over several years and a very serious breakdown in behaviour in 2006, as noted by parents, governors and the local authority. This decline has been reversed with a marked improvement in results and progress in 2007, especially in Year 11. The school's internal data indicates that, in most areas, this improvement in progress has been maintained. The school's overall effectiveness is now satisfactory.

Each of the four issues in the previous inspection report has been addressed. Pupils spoke about the improvement in the school's ethos, and noted that lessons are now better structured, partly since teachers use an agreed lesson format. They take a greater pride in the school and are eager to explain how the school has become better in the last two years. Their attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.

Standards in the school are now broadly average and progress is satisfactory. In particular, almost half the pupils attained at least five higher grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, last year. There have also been some improvements in test results at Key Stage 3. However, the progress of low attaining boys is slow.

The school's leaders recognise that more needs to be done to improve behaviour, which is inadequate overall. There are occasions in some classes when the behaviour of a minority of pupils impedes the learning of others. Leaders have instituted a number of processes and procedures to improve behaviour and the majority of pupils have responded positively, with signs of improvement over the last two years. Routines for classroom management are becoming embedded so that lessons are orderly. This has had an effect on improving the learning environment, as attested by pupils. Overall, pupils' personal development and well-being, as well as the care, support and guidance for them are both satisfactory.

The curriculum is well designed to meet pupils' needs and is enhanced by the school's status as a vocational lead school; extra courses are offered to provide a more personalised curriculum. A number of routes are available for pupils at age 14 and an increasing number are engaged in vocational subjects; there is also a special course designed for pupils who engage more readily with work-based learning. Teaching is satisfactory, with few examples of good and outstanding teaching; a few lessons are unsatisfactory. Recruitment continues to pose difficulties but there has been better retention of teaching staff over this year.

The school has shown a satisfactory capacity for improvement with the concrete steps taken since the last inspection. Leadership and management are satisfactory; the support provided by governors, who work closely with the school's leaders, is satisfactory. Senior leaders maintain a strong presence in the school, particularly at times when pupils move between classes and at break-times. This has helped to establish a calmer atmosphere than two years ago. The school's leaders note that they work in partnership with about 30 external agencies and 120 employers. They work together cohesively and undertake regular monitoring; the impact of the monitoring has yet to be evaluated. Overall, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve behaviour by ensuring there is greater consistency in lessons and across the school.
- Raise the standards of low attaining boys.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by enhancing the rigour and impact of monitoring procedures.

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

Pupils enter the school with attainment, which is about average. Although test results last year in Year 9 improved markedly in English, overall they remained significantly below average. At GCSE, the improved results were close to the national average. For example, the number of pupils achieving five or more good passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics, increased markedly in 2007 and was slightly above average. There was a wide variation in the performance of different subjects at GCSE and relatively few pupils achieved the highest grades of A*/A. Pupils did best in art, design and technology and geography. They did less well in information and communication technology, drama and English Literature. Overall Year 11 pupils made satisfactory progress from the time they entered the school in Year 7. There was not much difference in the performance of the various groups of pupils but low achieving boys made less progress; the school's leaders have yet to analyse the underlying reasons.

The school has worked hard to improve achievement. It has improved the quality of its tracking although this information is not used consistently by staff to raise achievement. Internal predictions provided by the school indicate that pupils will generally make satisfactory progress this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Younger pupils say they like being at school because there are lots of varied activities compared to their primary school. Older pupils noted, 'We are more proud of the school now'.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is satisfactory. There is charity work, for example raising money to build wells in Tanzania. Pupils learn more about their own culture on trips and popular camping expeditions. They are usually respectful of others' beliefs and of each other. Attendance figures are improving and are satisfactory because of stringent collection of information, analysis and consequent actions. Last year attendance was lower than the national average. However, it is now in line with national averages. The school has revised its procedures and persistent absenteeism is significantly reduced.

Behaviour is inadequate but most pupils feel safe and know whom to ask for help. A relatively high number of pupils have specific support for difficulties in behaviour, which is usually effective, though there are still occasional instances where the behaviour of some pupils disrupts the learning of others. This is also reflected in questionnaire returns from parents. Under a tenth of parents responded but the large majority, whilst recognising significant improvements, also expressed concerns about behaviour. There are signs of improvement with fewer serious

incidents in the summer term, in comparison to the autumn term. There is a sensible sliding scale of sanctions, from verbal warnings to exclusion: the level of fixed-term exclusions is high.

Pupils are aware of reasons for having a healthy life-style but do not always take responsibility for healthy eating. In contributing to the local community, the school welcomes adults, some of whom are disabled, to develop a range of computer skills. Pupils are pleased to have year committee meetings and the chairperson of the school council says that, 'It is a fantastic opportunity to get our voice heard, and we do cause changes in the school'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are examples in a variety of departments of good and outstanding lessons, but there is still a considerable variation in pupils' experiences and a significant minority of the teaching is inadequate.

Lessons are generally well planned and teachers begin by explaining to pupils what they are expected to learn. Information about their attainment and progress is kept systematically and they are set individual targets. In the better lessons, this information is used by teachers to ensure that the work activities are both accessible and challenging. The teachers also provide a range of interesting activities to engage pupils to work purposefully. In a geography lesson, for example, the teacher encouraged a lively and passionate discussion in which a group of high achieving pupils was challenged to discuss their views on global warming. An innovative mathematics lesson started with pupils describing various loci outdoors, before tackling questions in a textbook and ending with a challenging GCSE question resulting in a cardioid curve.

In weaker lessons, some pupils' behaviour is inadequate and not effectively managed by the teacher. The activities in these lessons do not engage the pupils so progress is limited and teachers' expectation can be too low, as in language classes where the target language is not used. In general, there are too few opportunities for pupils to work independently and in small groups. The questioning of pupils is often weak and does not challenge them to think carefully about their answers. The quality of marking is still too variable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a two-week timetable to offer more flexibility. Sensible changes have been made to the timetable to reduce movement time; pupils said that they preferred the longer one-hour lessons. A special progress group has been established for a small group of pupils in Year 7 who take time to make the transition to such a big school. Schemes of work have been re-written to include references to literacy and assessment for learning to address a key issue from the last inspection. Pupils follow an appropriate range of subjects in Years 7 to 9 and have a good range of choices subsequently.

In Key Stage 4, personalised learning has been developed by the offer of four different pathways. Vocational work is developing well to complement academic subjects, with an increasing number of pupils taking a vocational subject. Additional courses were offered in 2007, including law and catering. There is also a special pathway, called Route 4, for pupils who prefer to undertake accreditation in conjunction with work-based learning. Strong links have been developed with

local colleges to provide specialist provision, building on the school's specialist and vocational status.

There is a good range of extra curricular activities, which enrich the experiences of the pupils, who are strongly encouraged to take part. These include foreign visits, competitive sports and drama productions, as well as daily breakfast and homework clubs. A structured programme of personal, social and health education also includes trips to the local area. Careers education is included in all years and all Year 10 pupils undertake work experience. Virtually all pupils continue into education, employment and training, reaching the challenging targets set as part of the school's specialist status.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Pupils with learning and emotional difficulties are supported by experienced staff. Effective links are made with a good range of specialist agencies to provide support that matches pupils' individual needs. Regular health and safety checks are made and safeguarding requirements are met. Heads of year, some of whom are not qualified teachers, have received training to improve their skills in interpreting data on standards and progress so that they can advise pupils individually. Although pupils know their targets in their different subjects not all understand what they must do to reach them. Pupils feel that they receive good guidance about their options and future studies. There is a programme of support for those at risk of underachieving, but this has not yet been effective with low attaining boys, with some of whom the systems of behaviour management are also not sufficiently effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher, supported by a relatively new leadership team, has given clear direction for school improvement. They work collaboratively and improvements can already be seen in areas such as attendance and standards. Some areas, such as behaviour, still have not yet been improved to a reasonable level. The quality of evaluation is satisfactory overall but needs sharper focus to ensure it highlights the most important issues.

Action on key points from the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school improvement plan is appropriately focused on key areas. The school makes effective use of the monitoring and support of external partners and agencies to address the areas for improvement. The senior leaders and governors recognize that more work needs to be undertaken to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The quality of leadership and management of faculties and subjects varies, and is satisfactory overall. A number of areas are well led, including technology, art and physical education. Whole school policies have been established to help secure improvements, but the implementation of these is inconsistent across the school.

There are appropriate systems in place to monitor teaching but they are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure good improvement across the school. Some of the assessments by the school's leaders

are too generous. Good guidance is given to help teachers improve and the 'Teachers Forum' is an effective approach for improving teachers' skills and understanding.

Governors have acted effectively in the process of school improvement. They actively support the school and carry out their statutory duties effectively. An efficient system is now in place, partnering governors with individual members of the senior leadership team so that they have detailed knowledge of the working of the school and the progress it is making in relation to the plan for improvement. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The chair of governors commented, 'The school is now more transparent than it has ever been'.

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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
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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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	4
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

25 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Warwick School, Redhill, RH1 4AD

Thank you very much for welcoming us when we came to inspect your school on 11 and 12 June 2008 and showing us around. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you feel about the school. Your views are important in helping the school to improve.

The particular strengths of the school, which we judged to be satisfactory overall are:

- by the end of Year 11, most of you do well at GCSE and almost all of you go on to further education or training
- teaching is satisfactory
- you have an extensive choice in Year 9 between academic and vocational options, building on the school's specialist status.

Of course, there are always things that could be better and we have asked the school to:

- improve behaviour by ensuring there is greater consistency in lessons and across the school
- raise the standards of low attaining boys
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, by enhancing the rigour and impact of monitoring procedures.

Good luck with your future.

Yours sincerely

R Kapadia

Her Majesty's Inspector