

# Tytherington High School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	111402
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325372
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Toft HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1,162
Sixth form	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Smith
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	May 2006
School address	Manchester Road Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 2EE
Telephone number	01625 610220
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Email address	info@tytheringtonhs.cheshire.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 49 lessons, observed students around the school during break times and extra-curricular activities, and held meetings with governors, staff, students and some of the school's external partners. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents relating to the curriculum, teaching and assessment, pastoral care, leadership and management, and students' achievement.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at:

- the educational outcomes for students
- teaching, curriculum and pastoral care
- the school's leadership, management and capacity to improve.

## Information about the school

Tytherington High School is a co-educational community comprehensive school with specialist status in science. Nearly all students are White British and fewer than 2% speak English as an additional language. The school serves the north east of the town of Macclesfield, the small town of Bollington, and surrounding areas. Students come from a mix of mainly prosperous and some less-advantaged areas. Their attainment on entry is slightly above average. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is well below average, although it has risen recently. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little below average. The school has achieved a number of awards including: Investors in People; Sportsmark; Artsmark Silver; National Healthy Schools Award; and Intermediate International Schools Award.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

## Main findings

This is a good school with a significant number of outstanding features. It has developed considerably since its last inspection not least in dealing with the wide-ranging effects of a major fire. With the strong support of the local authority, it achieved this in an exemplary manner. This achievement was particularly effective in ensuring continuity of education for students. Attainment is above average and students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress throughout the school. Teaching and assessment are good and some excellent practice was seen. The school is aware, however, of some inconsistencies between teachers in the methods used to manage the behaviour of a small number of challenging students, the marking of work and the pitching of lessons at the right levels of difficulty for particular groups. An outstanding curriculum is well supported by the school's extensive partnerships with external organisations. It is significant in supporting the high levels of motivation of the vast majority of students, as is the outstanding support, guidance and care given to students. The personal development of students is good and some aspects are outstanding, although students are not as well aware of the cultural diversity in our country as they should be. The sixth form is good and well managed, with a high rate of satisfaction and retention of students. Leadership and management are good, overall, and some aspects are outstanding, although some aspects of management need further strengthening.

The school has excellent procedures for evaluating its performance. It has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, it has developed clear and outward-looking ambitions for the future. This has been well supported by the benefits the school has gained from its specialist science status. Excellent planning procedures have also helped the school to secure these improvements. Given its strong record in managing improvement in recent times, it has a good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards to the highest level by bringing the effectiveness of teaching and learning in all parts of the school up to the level of the best by improving the:
  - management of the small number of students in the main school whose

- behaviour impedes lesson progress, securing effective support from the local authority where appropriate
  - day-to-day marking and assessment of students' work, and the advice given to students to improve this work, throughout the school
  - extent to which the level of teaching and the work set matches the different levels of ability of students in classes throughout the school.
- Improve students' awareness of the diversity of cultures in our country.

## How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

2
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Attainment is above average throughout the school as shown in observations of lessons and by test and examination results. Overall, students make good progress in lessons and, over the long term, in courses. Test results at the end of Year 9 are above average, showing good progress in the core subjects, especially in English. Results in GCSEs in 2008 were above average, especially in English, history, design and technology, graphic products and physical education, though there was some variation between other subjects. Most students, including boys generally and girls of average and below average ability, made good progress in Key Stage 4, although some girls of higher ability made only satisfactory progress. The school has strong evidence that challenging targets in the GCSE should be met this year and that the performance of higher-ability girls is improving. Progress and attainment have improved since the last inspection, partly as a result of improvements to the curriculum, more tightly focused teaching in groups set by ability, and the deployment of mentors to help some students in danger of lagging behind. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. They are engaged and confident learners who appreciate the quality of what is provided for them. This provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities includes good assessment and clear information about the progress of all students being made available to teachers, together with good quality support to students given by teaching assistants.

Students achieve well. Their enjoyment is seen in diligent attitudes and a desire to do their best. Written work is usually neatly presented and students of all abilities are able to write at length. Most engage well in opportunities for group discussions in lessons, and this helps them to explore and extend their ideas and to think logically. A minority see such occasions as respites from work, and some teachers give them too much leeway.

Students make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. This shines through, for example, as they cooperate with each other in their learning, help in activities in the school and with primary school pupils, participate in decision making in the school council, help with staff appointments and communicate with students from schools overseas. Students are well prepared for work and further study by acquiring good basic skills, developing as confident and independent individuals and receiving good work experience and careers advice.

Students say they feel safe in school. In all year groups, they behave sensibly to maintain health and safety, for example as they work with tools and machinery in

practical lessons. They have a secure understanding of how to stay safe and are very confident that were issues of safety or bullying to crop up the staff would deal with them effectively. Behaviour is generally good or better, although minor disruption occurs in a few lessons and some boisterous behaviour was seen around the school. Attendance is above average. A past pattern of persistent absence has been eradicated through the school's rigorous action, although the school feels that it has not been able to secure adequate support from the local authority's education welfare service in the recent past. Students have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They make healthy choices in the refectory, know the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs, and eagerly take up the ample opportunities they have to exercise and play competitive sports.

Students' moral and social development is outstanding, supported by some animated and rigorous discussions in class about ethical and moral issues. The curriculum and ethos of the school contribute powerfully to social development. Although there are spiritual moments, opportunities for reflection are missed in lessons and other activities. More prominently, while participation in cultural events is high, students have a limited awareness of the diversity of cultures in our country. As a result, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## The quality of the school's work

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding features. The better lessons are well planned and taught at a brisk pace by teachers who are clearly able to project their enthusiasm for their subjects. Relationships are good and praise is well used. Questioning, and methods of organising group work, are well developed to engage students in lively discussions. Assessment is carried out regularly and students are set challenging targets to help them move on. This good teaching is a key influence on learning, which is mainly good or better throughout the school. Most students are

<sup>1</sup> Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

well motivated, willing to concentrate and make good progress. However, there are some inconsistencies in: how well teachers use assessment to plan and guide their teaching, and how well they pitch the difficulty of the work at levels which are right for the classes; the quality of feedback given to students when work has been marked; and how effective teachers are in managing challenging behaviour from a small minority of students. In lessons where these matters are satisfactory rather than good, progress is satisfactory.

Assessment has developed well since the last inspection. The school has very good procedures to track the progress of individual students, analyse how well particular groups are doing, set challenging targets and deal with underachievement. However, there remain some inconsistencies in the way departments use these procedures. This leads to some students, for some of the time, benefiting satisfactorily but not as well as they could from assessment. The leadership team has recognised this and is working with departments to bring practice overall up to the level of the best.

The curriculum is outstanding in its breadth and relevance to students. It has been improved since the last inspection, for example by expanding the range of vocational courses, and by accelerating the progress made by higher-attaining students by enabling them to proceed a year early onto GCSE courses. The curriculum offers an excellent variety of pathways which help to personalise students' experiences. The very strong links with external partners support the curriculum very well. A very good range of accredited courses enables students to gain appropriate qualifications. There are carefully planned and effective pathways for disaffected students. The curriculum is innovative and its continuing improvement is very well managed. The school is rightly ambitious to secure further development. The formal curriculum is enriched with an excellent range of interesting activities such as astronomy, international exchanges and a very well-developed sporting provision.

Support, care and guidance are outstanding and carefully targeted to meet the needs of all students. Staff are especially effective in meeting the needs of vulnerable students, enabling them to participate fully in the life of the school. The house and pastoral systems contribute strongly in enabling staff to know students very well. Clear communications with parents via the student support officers allows concerns to be dealt with rapidly. The school works very effectively with a wide range of agencies to meet the needs of more challenging students. However, the amount of external support to deal with very challenging behaviour and persistent absence is not enough to meet the school's needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	1
Support, guidance and care	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. The school has clear and high ambitions for wide-ranging development. It is impressively outward looking and makes a very significant contribution to the educational partnerships between schools and other organisations in the borough. It has an excellent record in managing improvement shown, for example, in the exemplary way in which it dealt with a major fire while minimising its impact on students' education. Self-evaluation is outstanding and realistic and it supports the clear communication of ambitions within and beyond the school. Senior leaders are well aware of the need to strengthen the contribution made by middle leaders to managing improvement, and to improve the consistency of teaching and assessment among teachers. Senior leaders are working well with these other staff to secure these improvements. The school achieves good levels of inclusion, though a few students continue to underachieve, owing mainly to their negative attitudes. Procedures for the safeguarding of students meet requirements and are supported by outstanding levels of pastoral care. Governors play a full, effective and well-organised part in holding the school to account and keeping a sharp eye on its direction of improvement. Relations with parents are close and well developed. Parental satisfaction is high. However, more still needs to be done to overcome the reluctance of some parents to engage with the school in the education of their children. Partnerships with external organisations are outstanding and beneficial to students. The school does much to contribute to community cohesion but students lack a sufficiently deep understanding of the cultural diversity of contemporary Britain. The school is very well managed and runs like clockwork. Financial management is exemplary. Given the school's budget, the good achievement of students and the fastidious way in which every penny is made to count, the school gives good value for money.

### *These are the grades for leadership and management*

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	1
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	1
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	1
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	1



## Sixth form

The sixth form is good. Standards at the end of Year 13 are above average with strong performance in some subjects such as English, mathematics, drama, French, German and the 'finance academy'. In Year 12, standards are in line with national trends with notable strengths in art and drama. Students make good progress, overall, stronger in Year 13 than in Year 12. There is no difference in rates of progress between different groups. The curriculum is well matched to needs and aspirations. A good range of courses are taught, both academic and vocational. Good work with partner organisations strengthens the school's capacity to enrich the experiences of students. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities also supports this very well, including opportunities to take responsibility by helping students in the main school. Entry criteria to the sixth form are set appropriately. Opportunities are available for students with a wide range of interests and aptitude and strong support is available to help them develop the skills of time management and independent learning. Community involvement is good and includes fundraising for charities and student exchanges with a school in India. Support and guidance are good with small tutor groups enabling the giving of detailed individual advice. This is rightly seen by many students as a key to their success. Students are well prepared before joining the sixth form and are well inducted on arrival. They feel well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment. The retention of students is good. They show positive attitudes to learning and their good motivation is strongly supported by committed and skilled teachers. Most progress to higher education, some securing Oxbridge places, and they have high expectations for the future. Good teaching promotes good learning. Assessment is thorough and well used to raise achievement, although some students would welcome clearer marking of their work to help them move forward in their learning, particularly in Year 12. Students are clear about their current levels of attainment and are eager to meet the targets set. The sixth form is well led and managed with particular strengths in the support, guidance and care given by tutors, aided by good communications with parents.

Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2
The overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school on the whole. The vast majority are satisfied with the education and care provided. This is clear from their responses to the questionnaire issued for the inspection and from the school's own detailed survey of parents' and carers' views. A large majority of parents and carers feel they are kept well informed about their children's achievement and well-being and are able to support their children's learning. This reflects the school's hard work to keep parents informed of celebrations, achievements, events and curriculum through interesting and informative newsletters, regular reports and booklets. The school regularly asks parents and carers for their views on important issues such as

transition from primary school to Year 7, trips and curriculum matters. These views influence the school's management decisions about the timing and content of events.

A small number of parents expressed concerns. Some were not satisfied with the school's relationships with them, and some were concerned about the behaviour of a few students and its impact on progress in lessons. The school takes such concerns seriously. Student support officers work very effectively to improve communications with parents and this initiative is contributing very well to pastoral care.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a Key Stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



20 March 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Tytherington High School, Macclesfield, SK10 2EE

After our visit to your school I would like to tell you of our findings.

- Tytherington High is a good school and some of what it does is outstanding.
- You are all given a good education through the excellent curriculum and the impressively wide range of enrichment activities. It was good to see so many of you enjoying these activities.
- The staff give you excellent support, guidance and care. They give you clear and helpful advice on your studies, any problems you face, and they help you well to prepare for your future lives.
- The school gives you excellent opportunities to develop both socially and morally. Opportunities for your spiritual and cultural development are good but you need better opportunities to learn about the diverse cultures in modern Britain.
- Teaching and assessment are good and some of the lessons we saw were outstanding.
- Most of you take every advantage of this teaching. Together with your generally good behaviour, concentration and attendance, this enables you to learn well and make good progress.
- Behaviour is mainly good throughout the school although a few students behaved childishly in some of the lessons seen.
- We were most impressed by the strong contribution you make to school life and your enthusiasm to participate and 'have a go'.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and some aspects are outstanding. Though the school is already good, staff and governors are always looking for ways to improve it further.

Although the school is good overall, we believe the following improvements are needed in some parts of the school.

- Improve marking in some classes to make sure that you are clear about your progress.
- Ensure that the small amount of poor behaviour is firmly handled.
- Help your teachers to know if the work set is too easy or too hard.
- Strengthen your understanding of the different cultures in Britain.

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish you well for your future studies and activities at Tytherington.

Yours faithfully

Peter Toft  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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