

The Long Eaton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112934
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325720
Inspection date	27 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Andrew Cook 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)	1356
Sixth form	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Parry
Headteacher	Mr Neil Calvert
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2006
School address	Thoresby Road Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG10 3NP
Telephone number	01159732438
Fax number	01159461371

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors and one Additional Inspector. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- Has the quality of teaching and learning improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good and what evidence is there to support this?
- How effective is teaching and learning in the sixth form and what progress are students making, taking into account the curriculum offered?
- How effective is the school's strategy to promote community cohesion and improve the provision for students' cultural development?

Evidence was gathered through lesson observations, discussions with students, senior leaders and managers, 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

The number of students attending Long Eaton School makes it larger than the average comprehensive school. Students' attainment when they join the school in Year 7 is average. The proportions of students from minority ethnic groups, and those whose first language is believed not to be English are much lower than the national average. The number of students who are judged to have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the proportion found nationally. The school became a specialist science college in 2003 and added applied learning as an additional specialism in April 2008. The school has an Enhanced Resource Centre for autistic students.

There is some joint sixth form provision with two other local schools forming the Long Eaton Area Partnership (LEAP) and joint working with four Ilkeston schools to create the Erewash Learning Community. The school has achieved the ECO School status, Inclusion Quality Mark, Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award and the International School Award. The school achieved Foundation School status in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Students' excellent personal development and the high quality care, guidance and support they receive results in their outstanding progress in the main school and good progress in the sixth form. Students enjoy school. Outstanding leadership and management are achieving the school's vision statement of 'Opening Doors to the Future'. The capacity of the school to maintain a high quality education, and also continually take action to improve, is outstanding.

Students in the main school make outstanding progress when taking into account their starting points. This is the case for all students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards, as measured by GCSE A* to C passes are well above the national average. The percentage of students who achieve five or more GCSE A* to G passes is well above the national average with 100% achieving this in 2007, and 98% in 2008. These impressive results demonstrate the school's success in helping students of different abilities to achieve. Standards in subjects linked to the school's specialism are also well above the national average. Standards in Spanish do not replicate this positive picture, which contributes to the challenge the school has to raise the percentage of students who take up a foreign language course. This currently stands at only 10% and is well below the national average.

The students enjoy school hugely, as seen in well above average attendance rates and their exemplary attitudes and behaviour. Their outstanding personal development underpins their achievements and ensures they have excellent opportunities to move on to further education training or employment. Students show care and consideration for each other, which adds to their feelings of safety in and around school. One example of students adopting healthy lifestyles is the fact the school has the highest percentage of students in the local authority who cycle to school. The students' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Although some are not keen when assemblies take place just before the midday break, they benefit from some excellent opportunities to pause and reflect. For example, the inspection took place on 'Holocaust Memorial Day' and an assembly powerfully captured students' attention.

The opportunities for students to contribute to the school, local, national and international communities are excellent. There are many examples of students raising money for charities, often initiated and organised by the students themselves. More locally, a group of Year 9 students has been actively involved in the re-launch of the Erewash Youth Crime Prevention Panel, which brings together the police, local schools and the borough council in addressing issues within the local community. The school is aware that more could be done to engage students in learning about and appreciating cultural diversity. Students have been involved in cultural awareness courses but the exciting vision of the new headteacher is rightly focused on doing more and using cultural experiences to inspire students to widen their aspirations.

The quality of teaching is good. It has outstanding features and, combined with students' keenness and motivation to learn, results in their outstanding progress. In the best lessons teachers use their expertise to ensure no time is wasted and students are constantly challenged and supported to achieve. Teachers motivate students to learn through the very good use of questioning, the relevant and appropriate use of interactive whiteboards and tasks that spark interest. In all lessons teachers are constantly assessing how well students are doing and then tailoring what they do to help them move on in their learning. Teachers, who build excellent relationships with students, engage them effectively in assessing their own, and their peers',

work and progress. Students take on these tasks of assessment with a real sense of maturity, sensitively discussing points as they evaluate each other's work. These strategies, known as 'assessment for learning' have been the key to improving teaching since the last inspection. Although much has been done to use assessment for learning consistently across the school there is more work to be done to ensure all teachers use these strategies skilfully.

The curriculum on offer for students is outstanding. A distinctive feature is the dynamic way it is managed so that it responds to the needs of all students. As school leaders have stated accurately in their evaluation, 'Self-evaluation processes support our view that curriculum provision is outstanding. It engages students, meets their needs and continues to have a positive impact on results, year-on-year.' The school has high performing specialist status in science and more recently in applied learning, which is acting as a driving force for leading curriculum change. New courses, such as the Business and Technology Education Council National course in medical and forensic science have been very successful. The school is working through a three-year programme to redesign the Key Stage 3 curriculum. This is within the context of a long-term strategy to develop students as effective, autonomous, independent learners, in order to raise standards further at GCSE and post-16, and to equip them for lifelong learning. In Year 9 students follow a short course GCSE in citizenship, which has been very successful, with 97% of Year 9 achieving a GCSE qualification in 2008 and 46% of these achieving grades A* to C. Students benefit from a wide range of curriculum enrichment activities including school residential experiences, skiing trips and language visits to France and Spain. In addition there is a good range of theatre trips, citizenship days, industry days, environment days, health roadshows, and a science week. In September 2008, the school achieved full International School Status, and has established good links with a school in Cuba and is developing links with schools in countries including Croatia, Georgia, Sweden and Germany.

The care, guidance and support given to students, led by the student development team, is outstanding. There is a genuine high level of care from all staff. All procedures required to keep students safe are in place and meet statutory requirements. The pastoral care provided by achievement leaders and supported by pastoral support assistants and form tutors is effective, consistent and supportive of students. Other key staff are also in place, including the pastoral attendance officer, school-based family resource worker, school nurse and 'safe speak' counsellor. They all complement the very effective work of the school to engage with and support any students whose needs may be a barrier to their learning. For students who occasionally need more specific learning and behavioural support, the school has good provision through the student support centre. Liaison with external agencies is regular and effective, including a fortnightly multi-agency meeting held on site. Attendance is very good and the school's firm policy on discouraging holidays in term time has given clear messages to all students and parents. Target setting is a real strength of the school. Progress data, used for tracking progress, is shared with students and parents and used to set challenging targets based on high expectations.

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. The new headteacher recognises the strength of the senior leadership team and has successfully begun to lead this team to build on the school's significant success. There is a very strong commitment to continuous improvement, which has seen standards rise and the quality of education maintained and improved. Challenging targets, set with the governors, are used very effectively to drive up standards for all students. Inclusion is a strength of the school and a new equal opportunities statement has been agreed with students, staff and governors. It highlights the commitment to giving all students equal access to courses, based on their individual needs. There are good

systems in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the school. More recent work in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning has been outstanding. This has highlighted that similar scrutiny in all curriculum areas would improve the school's self-evaluation.

The school's specialisms in science and applied learning have led to challenge and innovation within learning and teaching across the school. Specialist status has benefited the wider community through work with other schools, a variety of events for the local community and collaborative work with a range of business and industry partners. The specialist status has resulted in performance being raised at all levels.

Governors provide an excellent level of challenge and support. They have very good systems in place to hold the school to account and to engage with the school's vision and aspirations for the future. The senior leadership team and governors recognise rightly the need to build on the many opportunities for students to engage in both the local and wider communities in order to develop their citizenship skills and promote social cohesion. There is a strong determination to produce a clearly defined strategy that outlines how cultural experiences will have an impact on all students in order to raise their aspirations. The intention is for them to realise opportunities for their futures both locally and beyond.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Students' achievement is good in the sixth form and they reach standards that are broadly average from their varied starting points. The curriculum on offer is good. The school's specialist status is helping staff to drive innovative practice in providing alternative progression pathways to maximise student's achievement. The quality of teaching is good. Increasingly, the matching of the right course to the needs of different groups of students is improving the quality of teaching. The students' personal development continues to be excellent in the sixth form as does the quality of care, guidance and support. The leadership and management of the sixth form is shared effectively and is good overall. However, the pace of improvement in the sixth form has not always matched that found elsewhere in the school. Hence, the qualities of some areas of provision do not match those found in the main school. Good plans are in place to raise the quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form through adapting the curriculum further to meet the needs of all students.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop existing processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning to allow outstanding practice to be disseminated across all curriculum areas.
- Develop a strategy to promote social cohesion and raise aspirations which ensures that opportunities for cultural development are provided for all students.
- Complete the review of the sixth form curriculum, through effective self-evaluation and leadership, to ensure that appropriate progression pathways are available to all students.

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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	2
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	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
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	2	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	1
The attendance of learners	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	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	1	1

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	2
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	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
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	1	
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**

28 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of The Long Eaton School, Nottinghamshire, NG10 3NP

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with your excellent behaviour and the way you were able to explain why you enjoy school so much. We were very impressed with the excellent progress you make in the main school and the good progress of those of you who are in the sixth form. We judged your school to be outstanding. The combination of good and outstanding teaching along with your excellent attitudes in lessons results in you achieving well. We have asked that the senior staff in your school extend the excellent work they have been doing to check how good lessons are.

We found that you receive a very high level of care and support which helps you feel confident that staff will help you in any situation. The curriculum on offer to you is excellent. The different options you can choose from ensure that you can find something that will interest you and best fit the way you learn. There are good opportunities for you to experience various ways of life and get involved within school, locally and further field. Your new headteacher and senior leadership team, along with the governors, now have the task of developing your awareness of different cultures which will hopefully inspire you to know what to do when you leave the school.

Those of you who have taken up courses in the sixth form are making good progress. The senior staff have been asked to carry on developing the opportunities you get to learn in the sixth form so that you are given the best opportunities to achieve.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector