

Hasland Hall Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112959
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325727
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Elaine Taylor 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	860
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tracy Parrott
Headteacher	Miss Heather Boulton
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2005
School address	Broomfield Avenue Hasland Chesterfield Derbyshire S41 0LP
Telephone number	01246273985
Fax number	01246551362

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school draws its students from areas of above average social disadvantage. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most students are from White British backgrounds. The school shares its site with a junior school and the two schools use a communal dining facility. The school playing fields are not attached to the school and are a five-minute journey away.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that has worked hard and developed further some of the strengths noted at the last inspection. Much work has been done on the areas for improvement with the most noticeable success being in improved achievement in science. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and particularly appreciate the support and care their children receive and the wide range of activities in which they can take part.

Achievement is good. Students make good progress and reach standards that are above average. The results in GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 have been improving steadily and in 2008 were the best ever for the school. The commitment to inclusion is evident in the significantly higher number of students who gained five or more passes at grade G or above. All groups of students made the same good progress, because the school makes sure they all have the opportunity to follow a course of study that suits their individual needs. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has many good features.

The care, guidance and support for students are good and contribute to their good personal development and well-being. Vulnerable students are particularly well supported. Students feel safe and are confident that any issues that arise will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Relationships are positive between adults and students and between the older and younger ones. Students enjoy their learning as is shown by their good attendance that has improved since the last inspection. Behaviour is good both around the school and in lessons. Students have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. Children from the junior school that shares the site, also benefit from the healthy options and pleasant atmosphere in the school canteen. Students make an excellent contribution to the school and local communities. The school council has been instrumental in improving facilities. Charity collections are organised by the students and many of them work with younger students under the junior sports leaders' award scheme. They are prepared well for their future working lives because they achieve good levels of literacy and numeracy. Their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are improving and they are starting to develop the skills they need to be independent learners.

In the vast majority of lessons, students make good progress because the teaching is good. The clear teaching and learning policy has supported the improvements evident since the last inspection. Lessons are planned carefully and provide a range of activities that students told inspectors they find more enjoyable and interesting. However, there are some lessons where teachers talk for too long and students are too passive. As a result they have limited opportunities to develop independent learning skills. The school is working hard to improve the systems for guiding students on how to improve their work. In the most successful lessons, teachers help students to assess their own work and that of their classmates. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and many students are unsure of the levels at which they are working.

Leaders are united in ensuring that the vision of the school as a truly comprehensive establishment underpins all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher and her senior team provide good leadership and are committed to improving the achievement of students. They work closely with subject leaders as they monitor and evaluate the work in their areas, gathering evidence from a range of sources. These processes include the regular observation of teaching, but sometimes the feedback given to teachers is not specific enough about what needs to be done to improve. This has led to slower progress on some areas for improvement. There are

good links with parents, other organisations and the local authority to meet the needs of all members of the school community. Governors support and challenge well. The school is justifiably proud of its good reputation locally, but there is no complacency about the areas of its work that still require improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase opportunities in lessons for students to develop their skills as independent learners.
- Ensure students are consistently given the information and guidance they need on how to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of the monitoring done by middle leaders and the feedback that they give on the quality of teaching in their areas in order to accelerate improvements in student achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall standards are above average. Unvalidated results, for 2008, at Key Stage 3 show that standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 9 were well above average at all levels. In science, however, standards were broadly average. The average point score was well above the national average. In 2008 there was a dramatic increase in the proportion of students gaining five A* to C passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics. This is well above the national average and the school exceeded one of its challenging targets, placing it in the top 25% of schools nationally. The number of students gaining the higher A* and A grades was also above average. Inspection evidence indicates that these improvements are being sustained.

In 2008 students achieved well at Key Stage 3, having made good progress from their broadly average starting points. The school's tracking data and evidence from lesson observations indicate that progress is currently good. Although progress in 2008 from Key Stage 2 to 4 was satisfactory based on average point scores, strong inspection evidence indicates that this has now improved. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of effective support and a relevant curriculum. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The majority of students are considerate, behave well and cooperate well with each other at work and during leisure time. They have developed a good sense of responsibility and tolerance as future citizens. Students do report some bullying, but their good moral and social sense helps them to deal sensibly with such occasional incidents with the support of adults at the school. Overall, students understand well the importance of keeping each other safe. Younger students quickly develop an understanding of the importance of being fair to each other and this is an important factor in their spiritual development. Tutorial time and assemblies also give students regular opportunities to consider and reflect upon contemporary issues and global matters affecting our society. They are not always given regular opportunity in some lessons to contribute fully as individuals. Nevertheless, their good standards in key subjects prepare them well for their future working lives. The school has recognised the need to give students greater opportunity to share their views and opinions about school life, but the work and influence of the school council are developing well. Students do understand their responsibilities as well as their rights. As a result, many make an excellent contribution to their wider community,

such as through the excellent sports leader scheme, charity fundraising, and work involving global environmental matters.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Students enjoy their lessons and their good relationships with their teachers and make good progress. Teachers use a variety of strategies to encourage them to be independent, including the use of ICT. However, in some lessons students' learning is too passive. Teachers are aware of the needs of individual students and plan well to meet those needs. Occasionally, these plans are not carried out with sufficient accuracy and all students work on tasks at the same level. Teachers ensure they share the learning objectives with their students, but not all teachers are using effective questioning to check how well students are learning and progressing or challenge students to think more deeply.

Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the lessons by supporting all those who need additional help with their learning. The marking of students' work remains variable. There are some examples of very good practice, for example in design and technology and in English. In such cases, students are given clear guidance on the level they have reached in their work and how to improve further. Often, however the comments are too vague to promote improvements and consist chiefly of praise and recognition that work is good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The great majority of students enjoy their education and achieve well because the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum suitable for all their needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All students in Years 7 to 9 are able to follow two modern foreign languages and a higher than average number of them continue with their studies in Key Stage 4. There is a good range of GCSE subjects available with a growing number of vocational options. Additionally a small number of students take advantage of alternative courses provided through good partnership links with other institutions including Chesterfield College.

There is a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) in place, which is delivered through a combination of tutor work and topics integrated into all areas of the curriculum. Provision for developing basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT is good and there are work related opportunities available across the curriculum. Year 10 students complete one week of work experience and further opportunities are available through special curriculum days, such as the Young Engineers Scheme and the Maths Challenge. There is an extensive range of enrichment activities enjoyed and appreciated by a large number of students. These activities include sport, music, drama and an after school cookery club for vulnerable students. Further enhancement is provided by trips and visits at home and abroad.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has developed a range of pastoral and academic support systems that serve the students well. Overall, students feel secure in school because it pays good attention to promoting

their health and welfare, and suitable systems are in place to make sure students are safe. The general progress of each year group is monitored well by learning coordinators, and academic tracking systems are good. However, there remain some inconsistencies in the ways students are given information about their progress, and students are not always entirely clear about their next steps in learning. Nevertheless, students' pastoral needs are met effectively through the tutorial system, and a team of student support coordinators. This structure ensures that all students have an adult they can go to for advice and guidance if they experience a personal or academic problem. Similarly good support is provided for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are enabled to make good progress, not least because teaching assistants, who are attached to departments, develop subject knowledge which complements the teaching well. Students receive good careers advice overall from their tutors and through Connexions and the support and guidance provided at transition points enables them to move comfortably and successfully through the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders in the school have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve further and are effectively planning and implementing the necessary work. This is most noticeable in the improved achievement in science, although there is some way to go in some areas, such as ICT and modern foreign languages. Challenging targets are set for subject leaders and senior leaders work with them effectively so that they feel supported to meet these targets. Despite some significant recruitment difficulties, the leaders in the school have continued to raise standards and improve provision. Good practice is shared and there are good examples of middle leaders working together, for example in the case of physical education and science, where the success of the junior sports leaders scheme is being considered as a model for some innovative plans for older students to teach younger ones in science. Strategic planning, which is linked to financial management, is well focused on improving standards and is reviewed regularly. The school makes good contributions to its community and to the community at large. Governance is good. The governing body is well informed and is well placed to drive development and challenge performance. All statutory requirements are met. Day-to-day financial planning and monitoring are good and the school provides good value for money.

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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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	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
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
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	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

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

11 December 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Hasland Hall Community School, Chesterfield, S41 0LP

On behalf of myself and the other inspectors who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you for the way you contributed to the inspection.

We found that the school is good. It supports you to become confident and well-behaved young people with positive attitudes. We were impressed by your good attendance. We think you make an outstanding contribution to the school and local communities, for example through the work you do as sports leaders and by raising money for charities. The many musical and sporting activities in which so many of you take part build your confidence. You achieve well in your studies and it is encouraging to see that the standards you reach are improving every year.

Teachers work hard and the quality of the lessons and your learning in them are good. You told us you appreciate the improvements that have been made and that lessons are more interesting and fun. There is a good range of subjects you can study. The school is well led and managed and all the leaders are determined to improve further. You are supported well by your form tutors and feel safe at school.

We have asked the school to do the following.

- Make sure teachers provide more opportunities in lessons for you to develop the skills you need to become independent learners.
- Make sure you are given all the help and guidance you need to improve your work. You can help by making sure you know what your targets are and how well you are progressing towards them.
- Help subject leaders to be even more effective in monitoring the quality of the work in their departments. It would help the school if you shared with them those aspects of teaching that you find most effective in helping you to learn.

To those of you who gave up your time to talk to us, may I thank you. I encourage all students to read my full report, which contains more details.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector