

Hutton Church of England Grammar School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119794
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327132
Inspection dates	15–16 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Allan Torr HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School (total)	829
Sixth form	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Webster
Headteacher	Mr David Pearson
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
School address	Liverpool Road Hutton Preston Lancashire PR4 5SN
Telephone number	01772 613112
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Hutton is a smaller than average comprehensive school for boys aged 11-16 with a sixth form for boys and girls. Very few students leave or start other than in the usual entry points in Year 7 and Year 12. Very few students are eligible to take a free school meal. The proportion of students from a minority ethnic heritage is below the national average but has increased over the last three years. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also below the national average. The number of students with a learning difficulty and/or disability is increasing but remains below the national average. The school has a number of awards including Sportsmark, and healthy schools status. The school rugby teams are particularly successful, competing and winning in many county competitions.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Hutton Grammar is an outstanding school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and supportive. One comment in the returned Ofsted questionnaires sums up the thoughts of many, 'The general ethos promotes a caring, safe and aspirational atmosphere.' Many parents commented on the family feel of the school, its inclusive nature and the very good pastoral care provided for students. An example of this is the care and attention taken by the school to provide students with a smooth induction into the main school and into the sixth form.

Under the very effective leadership of the headteacher the school has flourished, and has risen to the challenge of modifying its curriculum to better meet the needs and interests of students whilst maintaining high standards. Most students join the school with above average levels of attainment. They make good progress in Key Stage 3 to reach standards that are well above the national average. This good progress continues in Key Stage 4 so that by the time students leave Year 11, almost three quarters attain five good passes at GCSE including English and mathematics which is well above the national average. Students' achievements overall are outstanding.

Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because they are very well taught and supported. Students who are not from a White British background make good progress overall and achieve standards that are above average for each of their ethnic groups. Improved systems of monitoring and tracking students' progress are having a positive impact. Teaching and learning are good. A large majority of lessons are fast paced and have short interesting tasks and visual stimuli to motivate and inspire students. Teachers support and guide students well, ask good questions, give advice and model answers to individuals so that they all succeed and make progress. This is particularly evident in high performing departments such as mathematics and sport. A small minority of lessons are dull. Students are not involved enough and listen for long periods to the teacher rather than having the opportunity to work independently at their own level.

Students enjoy school and this is reflected in their high attendance and high participation rates in school and out-of-school activities. The range and amount of extra-curricular activities and curricular enhancements such as trips and visits are very good. Students have opportunities to work with primary schools, for example helping with their productions of 'Joseph'. The sports department shows students how to teach primary pupils to be play leaders. The school's promotion of community cohesion and teaching of other cultures is satisfactory. Tutor and assembly time is not always used effectively enough. As a result, students' spiritual and cultural development is only satisfactory. The school is a calm and well ordered environment in which students' behaviour is good. Opportunities to make a positive contribution have improved since the last inspection. Students readily take on roles and responsibilities, raise funds for charitable causes and contribute to the school council. Students are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives; they leave school with high levels in basic skills as well as a good understanding of skills such as in information and communication technology (ICT) that will help them in their future life. The sports department do an excellent job in promoting respectful competition, teamwork and excellent attitudes.

Leadership and management throughout the school are good. Senior and departmental leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved. They set a very clear and well understood direction for the school which is supported by governors who

are effective in challenging the school and acting as critical friends. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Improvements to school buildings have supported the delivery of the restructured and broadened curriculum, which has had a positive impact on standards. For example, the newly built dance studio has enabled the school to introduce good quality drama lessons into the curriculum and better quality music lessons. As a result, standards in these subjects have risen. The large financial deficit of the past has been recovered and the school is now in surplus. The school provides exceptional value for money.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Approximately one third of students in the sixth form transfer from other schools or from overseas. Overall, they enter Year 12 with GCSE grades that are lower than the national average. Leaders and managers have an inclusive policy which enables students of all abilities to be accepted onto their desired courses. Teaching and learning are tailored to the needs of each individual; in one subject, for example, teaching was arranged to cater for the needs of one student. Students meet and many exceed their target grades by the time they leave the sixth form; this constitutes good achievement. There are high retention and progression rates meaning that almost every student goes on to higher education, training or employment. Leadership and management are good. Improvements to systems and procedures enable leaders to monitor the progress of students in more detail and to provide good support and guidance so that they can achieve. Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the sixth form and there is a good programme to implement new courses and qualifications. Students' personal development and well-being are excellent. Students enjoy being in the sixth form and play a full part in the school community and beyond. For example, they successfully support younger students, helping many to make progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good; every lesson observed in the inspection was good or better. Students are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning and the school takes every opportunity to support them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use form and assembly time more effectively and improve students' spiritual development and understanding of other cultures.
- Involve students more widely in lessons so that they are able to work more independently at their own level.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Students enter the school with above average levels in their national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2. They make good progress so that by the time they leave Year 9, they attain standards that are well above the national average. Almost every student attains the expected Level 5 in English, mathematics and science and high proportions attain the higher Levels 6 and 7, particularly in mathematics. In this subject, almost 90% of students make two levels of progress and close to 90% attain Level 6. It is a similar picture in ICT, where over 85% of students reach Level 5 or higher.

Progress is equally good at Key Stage 4 so that by the time students leave Year 11 they attain well above the national average. In 2008, 83% of students attained five or more A* to C grades at GCSE and just under three quarters attained five or more good passes including English and mathematics. In the past there has been some inconsistency between subjects; in languages,

for example, standards have been around the national average with fewer than average attaining the highest grades. Good support from the local authority and from the school's leadership is beginning to have an effect and standards and the rate of students' progress are increasing.

Students enter the sixth form with below average grades at GCSE. They make good progress and attain grades at A Level that are in line with the national average. Standards are higher in some subject than in others, for example, students' attainment in Fine Art, English language, economics and ICT is above average. A small proportion of students join the sixth form from overseas. Teachers take great care to integrate and support them and this enables them to achieve well.

Those students who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with specific learning difficulties make rapid progress because they are very well supported; expectations of them are high and they are fully included into the life of the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' social and moral development is good; this is reflected in their good behaviour, attention to the school's code of conduct and understanding about possible consequences to their actions. Students' cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. They are aware of their own beliefs and are able to articulate them confidently.

Most students enjoy school life, particularly the sports and extra curricular activities, and are proud to be at Hutton. Attendance rates and participation rates in out-of-hours activities are high. Three hours of physical education lessons a week for students in Years 7 and 8, healthy meals at lunchtime and very high use of bicycles to come to school demonstrate students' outstanding understanding of the need to lead a healthy lifestyle. Students feel safe in school and work very safely in laboratories and on the school field. They are very well aware of hazards and dangers including cyber bullying. As a consequence, their understanding of how to be safe is outstanding. The community arts projects and activities through the sports department have increased students' ability to make a positive contribution. They raise money for good causes and are actively involved in the life of the school. Students' basic skills in English, mathematics, ICT and science are high. Along with their experience of mini-enterprise activities, work experience, money management and collaboration exercises means that their preparation for their future lives is outstanding.

Students' personal development in the sixth form is outstanding. They make good use of the fitness room, contribute to a sixth form council and contribute to the full life of the school. For example, there is a very good system of peer tutoring of younger students. Around school they are respectful, mature, articulate and responsible.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Effective and improving teaching enables students to make outstanding progress and to enjoy their learning. The school's view of teaching is accurate. During the inspection, a majority of lessons were good or better. Lessons are well planned and structured. In a minority of lessons, however, students are not involved enough. In these lessons, students listen passively which detracts from the pace of work, especially for higher attainers. In the majority of lessons,

learning is fast paced, interesting, and teachers monitor learning and take actions to enable students to make good progress. In these lessons, the tasks that students complete are relevant, purposeful and interesting. This is particularly the case in mathematics and in physical education. Behaviour in most lessons is very well managed and students' conduct is often excellent. Learning is, however, disrupted in a small number of lessons because of low-level misbehaviour and because teaching is dull or disorganised.

Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Every lesson observed in the inspection was good or better. This is because students were highly active and involved; students were monitored and guided throughout the lesson and because lessons were interesting and relevant.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is broad, balanced and meets the wide and varying needs of the students. National Curriculum requirements are fully met and the school has made a good start at implementing the new curricular arrangements. Schemes of work build effectively on prior learning and this enables students to make good progress throughout the school. The real difference is at Key Stage 4. Subjects that do not meet the needs or interests of pupils, such as classics, have been dropped from the Key Stage 4 curriculum. Instead, new pathways and options have been introduced. This provides students with greater choice and more opportunities to succeed. The school has established links with other providers to provide some courses off-site in areas such as construction, catering, health and social care. Approximately 10% of students benefit from young apprenticeship programmes, extended work experience or vocational provision. Alterations to buildings have enabled the school to provide subjects such as drama and theatre studies and broaden courses in music and dance. A significant improvement to the ICT infrastructure has had a positive impact on standards.

Students benefit greatly from a minimum of two hours physical education (PE) each week and a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, with a strong focus on sport. Some year groups are challenged further by three hours of PE a week. The curriculum is enhanced very well by residential visits, day trips and by visitors to the school.

The curriculum in the sixth form is good and improving. There is an increased range of subjects including law, theatre studies and dance. A very strong feature is the personalisation of the curriculum to suit students' wishes. This has involved, for example, altering the timetable and times of the day to enable some students to be able to study the courses they want to follow. Collaborations with other providers is beginning to show some benefits, for example, there are good plans ahead to start teaching the new creative and media diploma from 2009.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are very complimentary about the support and care their children get from the school. A typical parental comment in the returned Ofsted questionnaires was, 'We would like to emphasise that the pastoral care has been excellent from day one of our son's entry to Hutton.' Parents praise the staff's sensitivity in dealing with issues and their support and commitment to pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability. This is an inclusive school. The school's inclusion manager works well with other agencies to ensure that students are supported and they are well cared for. Teaching assistants are effective and well deployed; for example, in the

sports department an able assistant works very well with individuals and groups to ensure they are all able to make at least good progress.

Students are safeguarded and protected. The government's recommendations for checking the qualifications and background of staff are in place. Students' welfare concerns are identified and responded to appropriately. Risk assessments are in place, including those for residential visits and for fire and an appropriate proportion of staff have been trained in First Aid and in child protection. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Supervision levels at break times are high. A few of the school's buildings however, do not allow full access to disabled students, parents and visitors.

Academic guidance has improved since the last inspection. Tracking systems have been established so that staff are more able to monitor the progress of different groups of students within the school and sixth form. Marking of work and guidance in lessons is generally good. This enables students to know what they need to do to improve their work, what levels they are working at and what their targets are. This is not consistent across all teachers. In a small minority of lessons, books were not marked sufficiently. Some tutors in daily tutor sessions provide good pastoral and academic help and guidance. Students benefit from this and their personal development and well-being improve as a result. In some tutor sessions, very little happens and time is wasted and in a very small minority of sessions, students' behaviour and lack of respect is unacceptable. Guidance about options is good in Year 9 and in Year 11 and allows successful access to the increasingly personalised curriculum. Regular review days in the sixth form provide students with a chance to discuss individual targets with tutors.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The effect that this inspirational and hard working team of senior leaders, led by a very able headteacher, has had on the school cannot be underestimated. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection to the facilities, the curriculum and to teaching and learning whilst maintaining and increasing the high standards. Capacity to make further improvements is outstanding. Leaders and staff at all levels are very clear about the priorities for improvement and confident of the path that Hutton is following. Effective and accurate self-evaluation has identified clear priorities for improvement. These are fed well into performance management systems, into departmental action plans and whole-school priorities. Targets are increasingly effective in raising attainment and there is clear evidence of faster rates of progress in most subjects and rising standards. Outstanding work is carried out to make Hutton an inclusive school so that discrimination is eliminated. The school, however, is at an early stage of implementing the statutory regulations for community cohesion.

Governance is effective. Governors provide good support and challenge to the senior team and subject leaders to ensure that standards remain high. Together with leaders at all levels they have worked hard to reduce the budget deficit that was in place a few years ago. Resources are now efficiently and very effectively deployed to ensure that standards remain high.

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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?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	2

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?	2	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
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	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	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?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	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	2	
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?	3	
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	2	
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**

17 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Hutton Church of England Grammar School, Lancashire,
PR4 5SN

Thank you for your responses and your time in talking to the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting with you and your teachers. Your comments helped us to get a clear understanding of school life, what you enjoy and value in school. We judged Hutton to be an outstanding school mainly because of the high standards you reach and the progress that you make in academic subjects as well as in your sporting prowess. We were impressed with your many awards for rugby and the impressive array of extra-curricular activities that you can subscribe to. This has had a positive impact on your understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle which we also judged to be outstanding. We were particularly impressed with the large proportion of bikes being used to get you to and from school, and the large amount of time you spend in physical activities. The school has improved rapidly since the last inspection. Teaching and learning, the curriculum and the guidance you get to improve your work have all changed for the better. Nonetheless, there are still a number of things that need improving. A small proportion of lessons are dull and you sit passively rather than being involved and extended at your own level. We have asked the school, therefore, to plan lessons which enable you to be fully involved throughout and involve you more in independent working. We also noted that some form times and assembly times are not used well enough. Your spiritual and cultural development is not as strong as your social and moral development. We have asked the school therefore to improve the quality of assemblies and form times.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr Linda Tetik Trisha Renshaw Peter McKay

Her Majesty's Inspector Her Majesty's Inspector Additional Inspector Additional Inspector