

# Campion School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122063
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327633
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1466
Sixth form	294
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Baylis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bob Clayton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Bugbrooke Northampton NN7 3QG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 833900
<b>Fax number</b>	01604 833906

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<b>Age group</b>	11–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors and four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large school serves a rural area in which socio-economic disadvantage rates are lower than average. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of students from minority ethnic groups and of those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language are much lower than found nationally. The proportion of students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, and the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school has been awarded specialist status for modern foreign languages. At its last inspection the school was given a notice to improve as significant improvement was needed to students' achievement.

## 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, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Champion is now a satisfactory and improving school with good features. The effectiveness of the sixth form is outstanding. A parent commented, 'I have noticed a marked improvement in the school over the past 12 months.' This view was echoed by other parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire, but some also expressed concerns about the number of temporary teachers. Senior leaders are aware of this issue and staffing has become far more stable during the current academic year. The impact of the action taken since the last inspection can now be seen in the improvement in students' progress, largely because of the increase in the proportion of good or better teaching, although the legacy of previous underachievement is still holding back progress, and for more able students in particular.

Students' progress from their above average starting points is now satisfactory. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 and GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 have been above average over recent years. In 2008, the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE with English and mathematics included was much higher than the national average. The proportion attaining the highest A\* to A grades, although above average, was not as high. Rigorous tracking of students' progress is helping to identify clearly where gaps exist in students' knowledge and understanding. Most students are on course to meet their targets for A\* to C grades. However, there is too wide a gap between the targets set for the higher attaining students and their current performance, and targeted support and better teaching have not yet had the desired impact in terms of gaining higher examination results. Although the quality of teaching is good overall, lessons are less effective where teachers do not focus sufficiently sharply on challenging the more able students.

Good care, guidance and support underpin students' good personal development and well-being. Staff provide very good emotional and social support so that students, including the most vulnerable, feel very much a part of the school and are prepared to make their own positive contributions. Students feel safe because procedures for protecting their interests and welfare are robust and effective, and their awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle is exceptional. Their sense of good enjoyment of the school is reflected in their good attendance and behaviour, and the good contribution they make to the school and the wider community. The curriculum is good and has some excellent features. The school's specialism gives large numbers of students the opportunity to experience a broad variety of foreign languages which they appreciate greatly. The impact of the specialist status is also evident in helping to enrich teaching and learning in the school and in the community of local primary schools. However, the targets set for attainment in languages were not met in 2008. The curriculum has been revised and more stability in staffing is helping improve progress in Key Stage 3, but these improvements have yet to have a clear impact on standards. The quality of leadership and management is good. The drive and determination provided by the headteacher and the senior leaders to tackle the weaknesses in the quality of teaching, coupled with the rigour of faculty leadership, are resulting in more accelerated improvement. They recognise that some students, especially the higher attainers, are not yet making enough progress. Improvement secured since the last inspection and the implementation of the right strategies mean that there is good capacity for further improvement. The school benefits from good governance. Governors' involvement in quality assurance is particularly noteworthy.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding sixth form. Students consistently attain exceptionally high standards. In 2008, their progress from their attainment on entry was outstanding, a further improvement from the previous year. The curriculum is outstanding in offering students a choice of courses which very closely match their talents and aspirations. Its success is evident in the high rates of retention and completion of the courses, and in students' excellent achievement. All students take at least a short course in a modern foreign language, reflecting the positive impact of the school's languages specialism. Targets are set for students by teachers based on prior attainment data and their own experience and knowledge, resulting in a close match between teaching and learning. Students' personal development is outstanding. They adopt a mature attitude to their work and take responsibility for their own progress. Alongside this, the support and guidance for students are extremely well organised and greatly appreciated by them. Leadership and management are outstanding, with very accurate self-evaluation and suitable plans for further development. Very effective partnerships with other colleges and universities and extensive guidance about future careers and education enable almost all students to go on to higher education, further training or employment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lesson activities provide consistent challenge for all groups of students, so that higher attaining students in particular achieve their full potential.
- Ensure that the attainment targets set for the school's languages specialism are met.

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

Students attain above average standards and their achievement is satisfactory. Until recently, students started at the school with above average attainment but made inadequate progress; now progress is satisfactory overall. Students currently in Year 11 are making good progress, largely because of better teaching and the regular use of data gained from monitoring progress to quickly provide support where it is most needed. Students are now well on track to achieve in line with national expectations, and for some cases, to exceed the challenging targets set. However, the school is some way off reaching the attainment targets set for the languages specialism. Progress for younger students in modern foreign languages is now better because of improved teaching and a more suitable curriculum, but this has not yet had a clear impact in terms of improved standards. Although steadily improving, the progress made by higher attaining students towards their targets is slower because work set for them is not always matched to their specific needs. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the tailored support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Around the school, students are courteous and friendly. Behaviour is good, reflecting the relatively low rates of exclusion. The great majority of parents' comments about their children

being safe and well cared for are justifiably favourable. Racial harmony is a strength. Students say that the small number of bullying incidents is dealt with effectively. Students' punctuality has improved over last year because of the changes made to the school day and a more robust approach to tackling late arrival to lessons. Participation in an extensive range of sporting activities and teachers' very good advice on students' personal health and encouragement to eat healthily ensure that students' adoption of healthy lifestyles is excellent. Students are articulate and confident in expressing their views so that their contribution to the school and local community is good. They develop good academic and interpersonal skills so that they are prepared well for the next stage of their education and future careers.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers have responded well to the additional support and advice provided by key staff and have increasingly high expectations of their own competence and what the students should be achieving. Students behave well in lessons and have good attitudes towards learning. They learn effectively when working independently and in groups, using self-assessment to enhance the quality of their work. Teachers' good use of assessment information enables them to target students with tasks and questions that challenge them well and this results in their better progress. However, this is not done so effectively for higher attaining students. The teachers do not always use questioning or create tasks that stimulate an excitement and relevance in their learning. Consequently, the nurturing of those skills students need to reach the A and A\* grades is underdeveloped. Students are very aware of their targets and know what they need to do to reach them. This awareness is often linked to the quality of marking which, though a little variable between subjects, gives mostly constructive, helpful feedback. Teaching assistants are well informed and very effective in their support for students.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum increasingly enables students to work to their strengths and interests. The strong provision for citizenship and social education ensures that students know how to contribute to a supportive and inclusive school community. The very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches all students' experience of their own and other cultures through visits and trips, and gives exceptionally large numbers opportunities to participate in music, drama, sports and much else. The school's specialist status has brought clear benefits, and the curriculum within modern foreign languages is being adjusted in the light of the missed targets. There are good arrangements for younger students to develop basic skills, and through creativity weeks, where the conventional curriculum is suspended, to explore imaginative approaches to learning. Around 30% of the older students take advantage of expanded opportunities to follow vocational courses. This is a further indication of how well the curriculum connects with students' current interests and future ambitions.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The care and welfare of students are given a high priority, and as a result they feel well supported and safe. The required procedures for health and safety and for child protection are fully in

place and effective. Individual needs are carefully and rigorously identified and support is personalised for the most vulnerable students, who are fully integrated and well supported, both in school and by a variety of external agencies such as the education welfare service. Particular strengths are effective links with primary schools, specific induction and intervention programmes and the establishment of 'access groups' for the most vulnerable students. The support provided by the teaching assistants and the well-organised provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enhance the care the students receive. Careful tracking of students' progress, the assertive mentoring system and the involvement of students and parents in target setting are now having a positive impact on improving students' achievement. Students are aware of their target levels, and guidance on how to reach these targets is informative and supported by timely academic intervention. Suitable careers advice and guidance help to ensure students are prepared well for higher education and employment.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, with effective support from senior leaders, has established strong leadership so that there is a common purpose shared by all who work at the school. A particular strength in leadership is the quality and consistency of self-evaluation, which has enabled managers at all levels to accurately identify strengths and target weaknesses. Action to remedy the latter is clearly identified in the school improvement plan and the review of impact appropriately involves staff and governors. Suitably challenging targets are set, including for the school's languages specialism, but these have yet to be fully met. The school is well aware that there is still some way to go to overcome the legacy of underachievement, particularly for the higher attaining students, so that they fully realise their potential. Governance has improved since the last inspection and it is now good. Governors provide well-balanced support and challenge, and their own self-evaluation helps them to carry out their roles responsibly. Community cohesion is satisfactory overall. Students' increasing understanding of national and international communities is already good, but the forging of links with specific groups within the local community such as different ethnic groups is as yet underdeveloped.

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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?	3	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	1
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	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

13 March 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Campion School, Bugbrooke, Northampton, NN7 3QG

Many thanks for helping us with the inspection of your school. We were extremely impressed with your warm welcome, politeness and friendliness. We enjoyed talking with you. I would like to let you know what we found.

When the school was last inspected in January 2008 you were not making the progress of which you were capable. Our inspection findings are that your progress is now satisfactory overall, and that the school no longer requires a 'Notice to Improve'. Yours is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features, and the sixth form is outstanding. The main reasons for the increasingly successful improvement are the drive and determination shown by the senior leaders, including Mr Clayton, to ensure that careful checks are made on your performance, and that the quality of teaching and learning improves. It is now good overall, although the activities within lessons are not always planned well enough to ensure that higher attainers in particular can make the most of them. The other good features are the curriculum and other enrichment activities offered by the school and your participation in and enjoyment of them, including the variety of languages you learn because of the school's specialist languages status. Your enjoyment is also reflected in your good attendance and behaviour. Staff take good care of you and guidance on how to improve your work is good. Concerted efforts to encourage you to be healthy through choice of food and participation in sporting activities work very well, so that we have judged this aspect of your personal development as excellent.

You attain above average standards in national tests and GCSE examinations. The school sets challenging targets, including for those of you who are very able, and for the school's languages specialism. However, these targets have yet to be fully met. Therefore, we have asked senior leaders and governors to ensure that:

- the activities teachers plan in lessons, especially for those of you who are higher attainers, are consistently challenging so that all of you achieve your full potential
- the attainment targets set for the school's languages specialism are met.

You can help by continuing to do your best in lessons and homework.

Best wishes for your examinations this year. Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala

Her Majesty's Inspector