

Paget High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124392
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328127
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Rashida Sharif 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)	999
Sixth form	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Welton
Headteacher	Don Smith
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
School address	Burton Road Branston Burton-on-Trent DE14 3DR
Telephone number	01283 239000
Fax number	01283 239019

Age group	11–18
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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

Paget High School is a comprehensive school that specialises in business and enterprise. Over one third of pupils in the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the majority being of Pakistani heritage. A significant minority of these have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above the national average. A large proportion of pupils come from areas experiencing significant economic hardship. Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good standard of education. Since the last inspection, the school has improved well despite significant changes in staffing, particularly at head of department level. Key to the school's effectiveness is the commitment shared by all staff that it can always do better. This is reflected in their 'I can do' philosophy, which is shared by all. They acknowledge that sometimes some of the lessons are not as interesting as at other times because they do not encourage pupils to debate or work independently. Some groups of students in the sixth form spoke of the many changes that they have witnessed in the last three years, particularly since the school was awarded its specialist status in business and enterprise. The status has not only provided them with a broader range of vocational courses but it has also helped to push up standards. Students told the inspectors that they feel that the school listens to them and helps them if they have any problems. Overall standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection and almost all pupils are making good progress from their starting points. This is due to a combination of factors that stem from the dedicated leadership and management, and the regular and accurate monitoring of teaching that is driving up its quality. The school's recent record demonstrates its good capacity for continued improvement. The school tracks pupils' progress regularly and rigorously, and provides support and intervention to ensure that they achieve well. The curriculum has also been tailored to meet the differing needs of learners across the school. There is good support and guidance focused on individual need both academically and pastorally. As one member of staff put it, 'The school's ethos is very inclusive'. The school sets targets that encourage pupils to give their individual best and show them that they are believed in. Celebration of all types of achievement is embedded across the school and visible in corridors and classrooms, particularly in the excellent artwork and the messages of 'I can do'. Teaching and learning are also predominantly good. Relationships in classrooms are good and lessons are generally well planned and mostly engaging. Pupils are supported well through the way that the support staff and the teachers work together to ensure that the needs of each individual pupil are met. The school recognises that not all lessons are interesting to students or challenging enough for the most able, and that marking is not consistently providing students with the feedback they need. Pupils' participate well in extra-curricular activities, including sport. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and they feel very well cared for. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure behaviour continues to be good in lessons and most teachers apply sanctions effectively where they need to. Pupils at all levels contribute well to the community in school and particularly beyond it, for example by supporting younger pupils through mentoring, raising money for charities and undertaking voluntary work. They make suggestions and feel any concerns they may have are taken seriously. The school's status in business and enterprise is helping to provide good opportunities for all pupils to develop workplace skills, which contribute well to the skills they need for their economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and further enhanced through the whole-school assemblies celebrating the achievements of those people placed in difficult circumstances who achieve against the odds, as in the recent Paralympics. This again is linked to the overall philosophy of the school of 'I can do'.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Students' current levels of attainment are in line with national averages overall, but with considerable variations between vocational

courses and academic subjects. Performance at AS and advanced levels is not as strong as it is on the vocational courses where students' achievement is good. Students' personal development and their care, guidance and support are good. They make an excellent contribution to the school through their mature attitude. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with many good features, particularly for the vocational programmes. But overall they are not as strong as in the main school because some of the teaching does not fully engage the students nor does it give them the opportunity to work independently. Through increasingly close collaboration with the school's main partners, students have access to a good range of courses at all levels. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the arrangements to monitor and improve the sixth form outcomes are not as well advanced as in the main school. The sixth form is inclusive and expanding, and an increasing number of students are progressing to either higher education or full-time employment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching through securing more consistently good and outstanding practice across the school with lessons that are exciting, engaging and challenging for the most able.
- Ensure that marking in books is coherent and consistent throughout the school and provides pupils with the feedback and advice they need to further improve their work.
- Increase the capacity of the sixth form management to monitor provision and improve outcomes, especially on the academic courses.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In 2007, Year 11 pupils' standards were below the national average but pupils achieved the challenging targets set for five A* to C grades in their GCSE examinations. This is good progress, given their starting points, particularly in English. The improved rate of progress is more marked in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3 where progress is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. However, the results in mathematics in Key stage 3 are showing a steady improvement. The 2008 GCSE and Advanced level results as well as the results for the vocational subjects are showing a marked improvement. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language do well. Pupils with learning difficulties also do well because of the additional targeted support they receive from support staff who work closely with teachers. The very rigorous tracking and intervention strategies are already showing an impact, with pupils in last year's Year 10 already gaining GCSE results in English and science that exceeded expectations for them. This represents good progress for many and outstanding progress for some. The impact of the specialist college status can be seen in an increased uptake in courses of information and communication technology (ICT) and business, and improved attainment in these subjects. The specialist subjects are also providing resources which have significantly improved the environment and the learning experience for learners overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school places a very high priority on the personal development and well-being of all. Pupils at all levels embrace their school community and speak fondly of the school's cohesiveness and 'family feel'. Pupils say they feel safe and if any problems of bullying or racism were to occur, they know who to go to. They have positive relationships with adults and peers and are proud of their school. Through the school council, they feel empowered to influence school policy

and often get what they ask for. For example, sixth formers were successful in persuading the school to have laptops so that they could work anytime they wanted to. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a comprehensive understanding of Britain as a diverse society, and the promotion of cultural diversity is a real strength of the school. Pupils are good at adopting healthy lifestyles and the range of sports activities and other clubs are popular with pupils. This is particularly evident in the 'School Daze' project in Year 11, which encourages pupils to be fully involved in the life of the school. They value and benefit from taking part in work experience, which enables them to develop key skills for the workplace and their future economic well-being. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their wider community. They work closely with primary schools, are involved in the local authority's Children's Trust Shadow Board and influence the running of the school through the school council. These personal skills enable them to develop very well as rounded individuals, able to contribute effectively to the community and eventually transfer to working roles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Key to the school's improvement in the quality of learning has been the use of a rigorous rolling programme of monitoring teaching and learning coupled with extensive professional development opportunities for staff. Planning which is consistent across the school, team teaching and lesson observations have created a culture in the school whereby the quality of teaching and learning is continually improved. In the majority of lessons, pupils have good relationships with staff who use a variety of strategies to engage and interest pupils. Where lessons are most effective pupils make good progress because teachers design lessons that are tightly focused on the skills and knowledge pupils need to gain to make progress. Where lessons are less effective teachers fail to take enough account of pupils individual learning needs, especially for the most able. The school has been successful in ensuring consistency in teachers' planning and needs now to ensure that all teachers adapt their planning to take sufficient account of the learning needs of the pupils in their classes. Teachers' marking in books is variable and does not always provide feedback to pupils on what they need to do to improve. A dedicated and well trained team of teaching assistants contribute well to the progress made by those who have specific learning needs, for example pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum and other activities combine to provide a good level of provision that is broad and varied and meets the needs and interests of pupils. The 'Farm project', where pupils have turned a redundant area of the school grounds into a smallholding with crops and livestock, has enhanced the range of qualifications offered by the science department and enriched the education of the whole school community. The weekly enterprise lesson in Key Stage 3 provides pupils with regular opportunities to learn about the world of work and many vocational courses at Key Stage 4 are supported by business partners that offer work placements. The school's specialist status in business and enterprise is having a positive impact with increased uptake in associated subjects at examination level and increased attainment in these subjects. The weekly lessons on personal and social education are developed well but not all staff are confident in the delivery of the range of topics which are not their specialisms. This leads to some pupils

not enjoying these lessons. The school is aware of this and is currently reviewing the programme and its teaching.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents hold the school in high regard and a majority commented positively on the support their children receive from the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and are well cared for, guided and supported by staff and, because relationships are good, they know they can seek help and support whenever they need it. Attendance is satisfactory and child protection arrangements and procedures are fully in place. Health and safety, including risk assessment, are effectively managed.

Learners are guided and supported well in all key stages and this contributes to their good progress. Their good academic tracking systems are used extensively to identify where pupils need extra help, which is then provided. However, this information is not consistently used by all staff to meet the needs of all its pupils, particularly the more able.

Vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and are then very well supported and encouraged to achieve so they too make good progress. The school works well with outside agencies. Sixth form students are involved in mentoring younger children in the feeder primary schools and pupils in Key Stage 3.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

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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?	2	3
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	2	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
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	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	3	
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	3
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	3
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	3
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	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**

19 September 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Paget High School, Business and Enterprise College, Staffordshire, DE14 3DR

On behalf of the inspection team and myself, I would like to thank you for your hospitality and your willingness to speak with us when we visited your school recently.

We found that your school provides a good standard of education for you all. It is well led and managed and because of this, it has improved since its last inspection. You told us that you have noticed the improvements yourself, particularly since the school achieved its specialist status. You also told us that the school's reputation in the community has improved and that you are proud of your school and that it 'feels like being part of a family'.

Staff make lots of effort to ensure that you are well cared for and make good progress, both academically and personally. We were delighted to see how much some of you enjoyed coming to school. You are taught well and the school provides a good and varied curriculum that supports you in gaining workplace skills and proceeding to training and higher education.

We have suggested to your headteacher and senior staff that they can improve the school still further by ensuring that:

- all your lessons are interesting and challenging and of the same quality as the best ones
- the marking in books gives you feedback and advice on how well you are doing and how you can improve your work even further
- the leadership of the sixth form is supported to help it monitor, influence and improve the curriculum outcomes.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif Her Majesty's Inspector