

Shenley Brook End School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131185
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	328562
Inspection date	25 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Lindsay Hebditch HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1442
Sixth form	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roger Malpass
Headteacher	Mr Glen Martin
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2006
School address	Walbank Grove Shenley Brook End Milton Keynes MK5 7ZT
Telephone number	01908 520264
Fax number	01908 520265

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Introduction

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

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. It also investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; the quality of provision; leadership and management; and the sixth form. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records. Other evidence included completed parental questionnaires, the scrutiny of curriculum and planning documents, observation of the school's work and interviews with staff and students. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the 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

Shenley Brook End School is a large school located on the western edge of Milton Keynes. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is low. Most students are of White British origin but the proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average. The proportion of students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. The majority of these students have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social problems. The school achieved specialist mathematics and computing status in September 2004 and a second specialism in science 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

Shenley Brook End School is an outstanding school. It enjoys an excellent local reputation and the proportion of students who wish to attend the school has increased so much in recent years that it is now oversubscribed. It provides a safe, calm environment in which students enjoy their education and achieve their goals. Parents praise the school for the quality of education it provides and the commitment of its staff to meeting the needs of every student. One parent summed up the views of many by commenting that: 'My child is coming on in leaps and bounds; I like the fact that the school recognises children learn in different ways'.

Achievement and standards are outstanding. Students enter the school with standards that are broadly average. They then make excellent progress so that by the end of Key Stage 4 their standards are exceptionally high. This excellent progress is consistent for all groups of students, including those who find learning difficult. The proportion of students who achieve five or more GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics is well above the national figure and improving. The quality of students' work is very high. Students demonstrate particularly good skills in the use of information and communication technology (ICT), developed through the school's specialism in this work. Students' success is widely celebrated and the termly year-group awards assemblies and annual awards evening are held in high esteem by students and parents.

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Students say how much they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their excellent attendance and behaviour. Incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively if they do occur. Most students try hard to adopt a healthy lifestyle, choosing healthier options at mealtimes and participating enthusiastically in the excellent range of sports activities which are available within the curriculum, or before and after school. Students are encouraged to contribute to the community at local, national and international levels. Much of their work is outstanding; for example, one group of students recently visited Madagascar to help villagers build a sustainable vegetable enclosure. The school council is an excellent 'student voice' and has a genuine influence on school decision-making. Students are involved in the appointment of staff and participate in staff training activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. There are excellent opportunities for students to develop economic awareness through enterprise activities, the citizenship programme and work experience.

Teaching and learning are outstanding because the school focuses so strongly and so effectively on improving students' ability to learn. One result of this is that, even in lessons where teaching is not outstanding, students demonstrate through the questions they ask that they want to be more independent and to think for themselves. The school encourages creativity and is keen for students and teachers to try out new ideas and make them work. Teachers plan their lessons very well indeed and produce resources of high quality, carefully designed to enable students to grasp concepts and develop their skills. Questioning is often excellent and students enjoy being challenged. Teachers routinely include opportunities in lessons for students to learn through discussion and debate. Students are very good at reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of their own performance.

The curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs of all students. Students experience a broad and balanced curriculum in Key Stage 3 and an excellent range of personalised learning 'pathways' in Key Stage 4, all of which provide appropriate choice within them, including the

opportunity to take the very successful certificate of personal effectiveness course. Students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well provided for. The school designs qualifications to meet individual student needs, helping to raise their aspirations and enabling them to achieve their potential. The school's specialisms are reflected well in the introduction of new courses such as statistics and the new diploma in ICT. There is an extensive range of enrichment activities and participation rates are good, adding much to students' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school has effective procedures for safeguarding learners that meet current statutory requirements. The school's experienced pastoral team provides help to students in a wide variety of ways and has excellent relationships with external agencies if more specialist help is needed. Students' academic progress is monitored very carefully. Any concerns are dealt with quickly and parents are informed. The inclusion centre is a strong feature of the school's support arrangements and has an excellent record of reintegrating students who exhibit challenging behaviour into mainstream education. Students who find learning difficult receive outstanding support and this helps them make excellent progress. Students receive very good careers guidance and there are comprehensive transition arrangements between the main school and the sixth form.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school sets itself challenging targets and almost invariably meets them. The headteacher and his senior leadership team set a clear direction for the school and communicate it effectively to other staff. Their 'hands-on' approach is welcomed by staff and morale is high. Governors know the school well and provide both effective support and sufficient challenge to the headteacher and senior leadership team. Management roles and responsibilities are defined clearly in the school. Subject team leaders have benefited from the well-organised management training which has helped them improve their job performance. Quality assurance is robust, including comprehensive systems for lesson observation and subject review. The school makes highly effective use of its specialisms to stimulate curriculum development and provide a focus for its collaborative activities with community organisations and other educational institutions. Community cohesion is outstanding. The majority of students live within walking distance of the school and understand that they are representatives of the school and the local community. They take this responsibility very seriously. Accommodation and resources are good but the provision of ICT equipment is outstanding. The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection. This, together with its self-critical approach to self-assessment and review, provide it with outstanding capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Student numbers in the sixth form have increased considerably in recent years, including growing numbers who are attracted from other schools. Students make good progress in relation to their starting points and achieve well in their GCE AS- and A-level examinations. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Students benefit from the good study practices they learn lower down in the school and develop into mature and reflective young adults. Teaching and learning are good but sometimes teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for the most able learners. Standards are high, although the proportion of students who achieve the highest grades at AS- and A-level is only average. The curriculum provides a good range of academic subjects but there are few opportunities for learners to undertake work experience. Care, guidance and support are excellent. Students value the quality of information they receive

when making their career and higher education choices. Leadership and management are good but have not yet resulted in a similar marked improvement to the quality of teaching and learning achieved in the main school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenge to the most able students in sixth form lessons.

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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	2
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	1	
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	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1	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	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
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**

20 April 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Shenley Brook End School, Milton Keynes, MK5 7ZT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed talking to you and have made sure that we have reflected your views in this report. We hope that many of you will find time to read it because it says some very complimentary things about your school! Many of your parents took the trouble to complete the questionnaires we sent out and we would be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to them for replying. Their comments and yours were very helpful in helping us to reach our overall judgement about the school.

The school is outstanding and provision in the sixth form is good. We are very impressed by the part you play in making the school so successful, through your excellent attendance and behaviour and your wholehearted commitment to do as well as you can. You spoke highly of how much you appreciate your teachers and we agree with you that teaching and learning are outstanding. As a result, achievement in the school is outstanding and standards are extremely high.

Your headteacher and senior leadership team are not content to rest on their laurels and have plans to make the school even better. We identified one thing that the school should do in the sixth form to help them in this:

- provide more challenge to the most able students in sixth form lessons.

We wish you all the very best for the future. Well done!

Yours faithfully

Lindsay Hebditch

Her Majesty's Inspector