

Tile Hill Wood School and Language College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103735
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	336143
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Walker

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	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1288
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Wall
Headteacher	Gina O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2007
School address	Nutbrook Avenue Coventry CV4 9PW
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 31 lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, the vice chair of governors, staff and groups of students. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the tracking system to monitor the students' progress, the work students were doing in their books, the school improvement plan and the questionnaires completed by the parents, staff and a sample of students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress of all groups of students in the school
- the quality of teaching and learning across the school
- the effectiveness of care, guidance and support and the impact on the personal development of students
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in monitoring, evaluating and improving performance
- the effectiveness of the sixth form provision in meeting students' needs.

Information about the school

The school is larger than other secondary schools. It is situated in the Tile Hill area in the western suburbs of Coventry. The school draws students from all areas of the city. There is a shared sixth-form provision with the neighbouring boys' school as part of the West Coventry Sixth Form. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds but a quarter of the students are from minority ethnic groups including Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani heritage. A small percentage of students do not have English as their first language and the main languages spoken at home for these students are Urdu, Punjabi and Arabic. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has been awarded the Artsmark, International School Award, Sportsmark and Investors in People status.

The school is designated as a specialist language college with a second specialism in applied learning. The headteacher has been in post since April 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The new headteacher provides very effective leadership so that there is a clear vision for continuous improvement. Parents speak very highly of the school and the support for their daughters. One parent wrote, 'I am very impressed overall by the school. My daughter has grown in confidence and achieved a great deal since joining'.

Students make good progress and attain at least average standards. The 2009 GCSE results for Year 11 students were slightly above average and demonstrate an improvement on previous years. The newly introduced tracking system for progress is beginning to identify underachieving students, who then receive appropriate support through a range of intervention strategies. The school acknowledges the need to raise standards further across all subjects and particularly to increase rates of progress in English and mathematics. Students in the sixth form make good progress and the majority of girls progress to higher education.

Curricular provision is good and reflects the positive impact of the language specialist status. There is a tangible international flavour to the school as students have the opportunity to study a good range of modern foreign languages. Teaching is good overall so that students work hard and show a commitment to do well in their studies. The high standard of care, guidance and support is greatly supporting the good personal development of the students.

Students of all ages feel very safe and secure in the school. The behaviour of the majority of students is outstanding and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect between teachers and students. Attendance is now in line with the national average although the attendance of a small but significant number of students is inadequate. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. The school is fully inclusive and girls from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school is in no doubt about the improvements needed. The clear vision and ambition of the headteacher and leadership team, the developing systems of tracking students' progress and the improvements in standards indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of attainment across the school so that the proportion of students attaining five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is above the national average by ensuring that teachers:

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- identify and provide additional support for underachieving students
- develop students' skills in reading and analysing text
- extend students' numeracy skills
- challenge and support students to gain the target grades in all subject areas
- fully engage students in their learning and regularly check their understanding.
- Improve the level of student attendance so that it is above average for all groups by making sure that the school is :
 - identifying individuals and groups of students whose attendance is unsatisfactory
 - developing rigorous systems for monitoring and following up absences
 - working positively with students, parents and carers in order to improve the level of attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Evidence from students' work seen during the inspection demonstrates that the majority of classes are making good progress during the current year. Students are attentive and display an eagerness to do well in their work. Most students enjoy learning and make good progress from their close-to-average starting points. By the end of Year 9, students make good progress and more students are now attaining the higher levels in English and mathematics. In 2009, 50% of students in Year 11 gained five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, which is slightly above the national average. Attainment in the specialist modern languages subjects is above average and all students gain a qualification in at least one modern language. The additional focus on English and mathematics during the past year is raising standards and progress in these subjects. The school rightly identifies underachievement by students of lower ability and targeted support is improving their rates of progress across the school. Inspection evidence confirmed that students with special education needs and/or disabilities and those entitled to free school meals make good progress. Students from ethnic minority backgrounds also make good progress in line with other students in the school.

Most students have a very clear understanding of eating healthily and taking part in sporting activities. They relish the opportunities to take responsibility such as looking after the younger students or taking part in the assemblies. Students raise money for a range of charities and make a good contribution to the local community by organising events for the elderly. The student voice is not fully active in the school at the moment. Nevertheless, students show respect and empathy towards each other as well as demonstrating an excellent appreciation of the multicultural diversity of our society. Students develop a good understanding of what they have to do to succeed in their future education and careers.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The large majority of teaching is good as most teachers plan lessons which are appropriate to the abilities of the students. The warm and good-humoured relationships between teachers and students ensure that there is a positive learning environment in the classroom. In the best lessons teachers plan a range of interesting activities and have high expectations of the students. As a result, students display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. Outstanding learning takes place when teachers extend the students and provide opportunities for independent thinking. However, not all teachers are fully engaging their students in lessons or checking their understanding of the work. Students are well informed about their targets and how to improve their work although they are not always sufficiently challenged to gain their target grades in all subject areas.

The curriculum provides the students with an extensive range of learning opportunities. The school's specialist status encourages innovative developments such as the 'immersion project' in French. The additional specialism in applied learning enables students in Years 10 and 11 to pursue particular vocational interests which meet their learning needs well. Programmes in religious education and personal, health and social education greatly support the good personal development of the students. Students learn how to work independently and cooperatively to solve problems in a number of enterprise activities including work experience. Provision in literacy, numeracy and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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information and communication technology is good although the school rightly identifies the further development of these skills as key areas for improvement. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits greatly enhances the students' enjoyment and experience of school.

Arrangements for care, guidance and support are strengths of the school. Good working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit students, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective programmes. Tutors, learning managers and year heads are fully involved in promoting the academic and personal development of the students. However, systems for monitoring absences and improving attendance are not fully effective. Students with English as an additional language are well supported and quickly integrate into the school. Good arrangements are in place to support a smooth transition from a range of primary schools. Structured guidance through the careers programme help students make confident and well-informed choices about their future.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and collaborative leadership which is driving improvements in the school. The key strategic priorities have been shared with staff so that there is a clear agenda for raising standards in all areas of the school. The newly formed leadership group is providing a strong impetus for improvement across the school. Rigorous systems of monitoring teaching and tracking students' progress are beginning to raise standards.

The school improvement plan is a comprehensive working document with clear actions and targets which are particularly focused on improving students' attainment and progress. Governors are informed of the school's progress and areas for development. They are fully involved in monitoring progress and holding the school to account. The subject leaders are developing their roles so that they are more effective in their planning, supporting and monitoring responsibilities. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all.

The school is developing positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are given regular information about school events and the progress of their children. The school has good partnerships with community groups, external services, local schools

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and a wide range of employers. Further examples of its successful collaboration with others include the West Coventry Sixth Form, which integrates provision with the neighbouring boys' school, and its membership of the South West Coventry Federation. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and encourages all parents and members of the community to feel welcome. The school is proactive in meeting parents from the Indian and Pakistani communities so that they can fully support their children in school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

Students from all social and ethnic backgrounds enter the sixth form and make good progress. They attain results in A and AS level courses which enable them to continue successfully to higher education, training or employment. Retention rates on all courses are high although there is some variation in students' progress between subjects. Students say that they enjoy their sixth-form education. They have mature attitudes to learning, attend regularly, work hard and make a considerable contribution to the main school and wider community. Teaching is generally good. There is an impressive range of advanced courses available. Level 2 courses have been offered, but students choose to study these elsewhere. Students greatly appreciate the helpful support that they receive when they plan their futures. Effective leadership and management ensure that students benefit from the well-established links with the neighbouring boys' school. The quality of educational provision for students who work off the school site is good.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers are very positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Parents mention that they are happy with the education in the school and feel that their children are well prepared for the future. A small number of parents feel that the school does not help them to support their children's learning. Some indicated that the school did not take account of their views and suggestions. Leaders and governors acknowledge that there is still more to be done to involve parents more actively in supporting learning and school improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Tile Hill Wood School and Language College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 331 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1288 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	117	35	190	57	16	5	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	122	37	194	59	6	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	95	29	191	58	19	6	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	106	32	193	58	11	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	90	27	207	63	12	4	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	21	197	60	37	11	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	22	207	63	28	8	4	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	96	29	187	56	13	4	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	93	28	198	60	12	4	6	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	90	27	187	56	20	6	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	64	19	191	58	26	9	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	83	25	219	66	6	2	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	127	38	127	38	8	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 October 2009

Dear Students,

Inspection of Tile Hill Wood School and Language College, Coventry, CV4 9PW

Thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you during breaks, lunchtimes and in the extra-curricular activities after school. Tile Hill Wood is a good school and has some outstanding features. Your parents and carers told us how pleased they are with the standard of education in the school.

There are many positive things about your school. You have a very good headteacher who is working well with the governors and staff in securing improvements in the school. You are making good progress and achieving standards that are slightly above the national average. You have the opportunity to study a range of modern foreign languages. There is an impressive number of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Teaching is good and there is a positive learning atmosphere in most lessons. High standards of care, guidance and support are greatly supporting your good personal development. Your behaviour and general social and cultural awareness are excellent. Well done! You are growing into confident, perceptive and caring young people. It was good to see how you show considerable respect towards each other regardless of age, religion or ethnicity.

We have asked the headteacher, the staff and the governors to do the following things to make the school even better:

- raise standards across the school so that the proportion of students attaining five A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is above the national average
- improve the level of student attendance so that it is above the national average for all groups.

We have also requested teachers to ensure that you are all fully engaged in your own learning and that they check your understanding on a more regular basis. We have passed many of your comments for improvement to the headteacher and we know she will discuss these with the newly formed student voice in the near future. Keep working hard and enjoying the many good things in your school.

With very best wishes,

Yours faithfully
Stephen Walker
Lead Inspector

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