

Lealands High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109686
Local Authority	Luton
Inspection number	337355
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	880
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sherone Phillips
Headteacher	Annette Ford
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2006
School address	Sundon Park Road Luton LU3 3AL
Telephone number	01582 611600
Fax number	01582 612227
Email address	Lealands.high.admin@luton.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 39 lessons of which 38 were delivered by different teachers. In addition, they held meetings with governors, staff, representatives of the local authority and three groups of students. They observed the school's work, talked to many students informally, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including students' assessed work in lessons. In addition to returns of 192 parental questionnaires, inspectors considered responses from staff and students' questionnaires.

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

- the progress made by students in lessons, particularly for different groups of students, including those of higher ability
- the extent to which the school is monitoring and improving the quality of its teaching, learning and assessment in all subjects
- the impact of the school's specialist sports status on the students' experiences, motivation and attainment
- how well the school has evaluated and monitored the quality of its work across all areas.

Information about the school

Lealands High School is a medium-sized comprehensive school located in north Luton, Bedfordshire. The majority of students are White British with around 36%, higher than average, from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the highest proportions being of Black Caribbean, White and Black Caribbean, and Black African heritage. Similarly, over a third of the students speak a first language other than English. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average although the number of students with statements of special educational needs is lower than average. The school gained specialist sports status in September 2006 and holds the Healthy Schools award. It gained the Sportsmark award in 2009. A new headteacher was appointed in 2007. At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was on long-term sick leave and the school was being temporarily led by two deputy headteachers.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Lealands is a satisfactory school. It is an inclusive school that is successfully removing barriers to learning and improving the life chances of many young people. Most students enjoy school, feel it is a safe place to be and attend regularly. Students achieve well and standards are rising, although not enough students gain the highest grades. Targeted individual support, intervention and the increased tracking of students' performance are ensuring more students make good progress. Support for vulnerable groups, including looked after children, is strong and is helping the great majority of these to achieve at least in line with expectations. Most students behave appropriately and many develop good levels of confidence and good personal qualities to prepare them well for life after school. A high proportion of students progress successfully from Year 11 to further education, and this number is increasing.

Lessons are generally well planned. Although much teaching is good, with some outstanding practice, behaviour management in a minority of lessons is not effective and leads to disrupted learning. As a result, the progress students make in these lessons is impeded. Not all lessons include activities that sufficiently challenge the most able or encourage students to think for themselves. Consequently, teaching is satisfactory overall. Most students are punctual to lessons and concentrate well on the tasks they are set. Assessment data are used well to support progress through improved monitoring and intervention, with detailed written feedback in most subjects, so that students make good progress in their learning. The school's specialist sports status is a key strength of the school. It is well managed and standards in the subject are improving as a result. It has also enriched the curriculum by increasing the range of activities offered, and students' participation in and enjoyment of sport. The support of vulnerable groups is strong and benefits from very good collaborative working with a wide range of external agencies to improve students' well-being.

The deputy headteachers, along with a restructured senior management team, are working effectively together to ensure the school operates smoothly and maintains its focus on improvement. The school's self-evaluation procedures are well established and broadly accurate in identifying its main strengths and areas for development. Since the last inspection the school has improved in a number of key areas including students' achievement, the curriculum and the quality of support given. In addition, the school has strengthened its processes for managing and using data to monitor the performance of individual students and different cohorts. However, it is not yet clear how long the temporary management arrangements will be in place. Furthermore, the governing body does not yet have a full complement of members after a recent significant restructure. Some key areas, such as the school's procedures for assuring equality of opportunity for

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all groups of students, have not been well enough addressed since the last inspection. Consequently, the school currently only has a satisfactory capacity for further sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of equality of opportunity by managers and governors:
 - ensuring governors are trained to be clear about their roles and responsibilities
 - improving the active promotion of equality and celebration of diversity in lessons
 - ensuring all plans to promote equality for students and staff are in place, contain measurable targets and are monitored frequently to assess their impact on practice and outcomes.
- Improve the quality of students' learning in all lessons by:
 - making sure that behaviour management is consistently good so that learning is not disrupted.
- Continue to raise attainment in all subjects, and particularly students' achievement of higher grades, to at least the national average by:
 - ensuring all tasks and resources in lessons sufficiently challenge and stretch higher attaining students
 - ensuring all students are encouraged take more responsibility for their own learning
 - extend the school's improved strategies in the monitoring and intervention of pupils' performance
 - sharing the very best practice in written feedback on students' work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are lower than average. The vast majority make good progress and reach standards that are broadly average by the time they leave Year 11. Standards are improving gradually, including in English and mathematics, although the overall proportion of students gaining the highest grades is low. The school has correctly identified the groups that underperform and has taken appropriate action. For example, school data indicate that the proportion of Black Caribbean students who achieved five or more A* to C GCSE grades in 2009, and the overall attainment of girls, both look set to improve markedly in 2010. Most students make at least the progress expected of them in lessons, with good or outstanding progress where behaviour is managed well. Students with special educational needs

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and/or disabilities achieve in line with expectations in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Some make good progress and exceed their targets, and many make good gains in confidence and interpersonal skills. Since the introduction of the school's specialist status for sports, results in physical education have risen to above the national average with a notable increase in the number of students gaining higher grades.

Most students feel safe at school although the perception surveys of some lower year groups indicate they feel a little less secure. This is mainly due to the behaviour of a few older students. Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in their improving levels of attendance and punctuality. Attendance has improved to above average with a falling proportion of persistent absence. The attendance of a very small number of students with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, despite the school's efforts to improve it. Overall, behaviour is satisfactory. Most students move around the school site in an orderly manner and behave appropriately towards each other and teaching staff. The previously high number of exclusions is falling and recorded incidents of bullying are low. The school's sports status has increased the take up of physical activities and helped students understand the benefit of keeping active and leading healthier lifestyles. For example, over three quarters of students choose to walk to school and over half take part in sports-related activities at lunchtimes and after school. The monitoring of healthy eating, including packed lunches, however, is less well developed. There is a good and increasing range of opportunities which are benefitting students in making a positive contribution to the school and local community. Student leaders and peer mentors take their role seriously and act responsibly. The student voice through the student council is becoming increasingly influential, although not all students are fully aware of it or its impact in bringing about changes. Students demonstrate good social skills and they interact well with others from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Opportunities for reflection and independent thought, however, are more limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3

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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Pupils' behaviour	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and assessment to support learning is improving. Lessons are generally well planned and taught enthusiastically. Teachers display good subject knowledge and use assessment data well to monitor students' progress against their predicted targets. Students received frequent feedback on how well they are doing, although the high quality of written feedback on students' work seen in some subjects is not replicated in others. Where progress is good or outstanding in lessons, teachers manage behaviour very well and ensure the planned activities enthuse all students and stretch the most able. In these lessons, students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are, on occasions, exemplary. In a number of lessons observed, however, the behaviour of a minority of students was not managed effectively which disrupted the learning and progress made by the group. Electronic whiteboards are used appropriately by most teachers to enhance learning. They are used particularly creatively by a few teachers to increase students' interest and engagement.

The school provides a good curriculum for all year groups. The curriculum meets the needs of individuals and groups of students well and provides good support for students' academic and personal development. The sports college status is used very effectively to increase students' motivation and is contributing positively to improving standards and students' healthy choices. All students gain an accredited sports award at the end of Year 11, helping them to develop team-working and leadership skills which prepare them well for their adult lives. The increasing number of vocational subjects in Years 10 and 11 has had a good impact on students' motivation and achievement. Extended subjects such as GCSE dance are widening the choice of subjects available to students. Extra-curricular provision shows improving participation with about half of all students engaged in extra-curricular sports activities. The school is continuing to develop the curriculum at Key Stage 3 to further tailor it to meet students' needs.

The school has good, effective links with outside agencies and the local authority to provide additional expertise and support. This contributes to students' good academic and personal progress and development. The school has strengthened its intervention procedures for students identified at risk of not achieving as well as they should, and now supports these students swiftly and effectively. Support for vulnerable groups, including looked after children, those with English as an additional language and

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students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and is raising their aspirations successfully. Attendance is monitored closely, and interventions are swift which has resulted in an improving trend. Effective after-school revision clubs for Year 10 and 11 students in several subjects are helping many students reach or exceed their targets. Careers guidance is good and helps students make appropriate choices about their future.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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 senior leadership team and middle managers set high expectations for the school and its students and, along with the commitment of school staff, are bringing about improvement in a number of areas. Self-evaluation recognises that inconsistencies in performance between subjects has not yet been rectified. The recruitment of teaching staff is still problematic but is being managed appropriately. As a longer-term solution, the school is using internal training and support systems to develop their own teachers and managers. The system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is proving effective and allowing the school to identify where its strengths and areas for improvement lie.

The new chair of governors provides clear leadership and members bring a range of helpful expertise to their role as governors. The governing body recognises that the quality of monitoring, particularly of the school's finances and in assuring equality and promoting diversity, has been weak. It has set appropriate plans to strengthen the school's financial position. Statutory requirements for safeguarding are fully in place and are thoroughly implemented.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate. The performance of different groups of students is monitored frequently and any underperformance is targeted for support appropriately. In-year school data show that gaps in different groups' achievement are reducing. However, the school does not formally plan, monitor, assess and evaluate the promotion of race equality for students or staff, or measure the impact of its actions, to ensure that any potential discrimination is avoided. Targets set within the disability and gender equality plans are too vague to allow their achievement to be accurately measured. Governors have not received recent equalities training to clarify their responsibilities within this area.

The school makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion and this has

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an extremely positive impact on the school community. The school was recognised for its work by achieving 'community project of the year' at the 2009 Pride of Luton awards. Students from different ethnic groups work very cooperatively together in school. The school promotes a strong sense of local community through sports, drama, and music events, and has close links with several community projects including organising events for senior citizens. Promoting international community cohesion is an area of the school's work that is, as yet, under-developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
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	3

Views of parents and carers

The questionnaires indicate that parents and carers are generally supportive of the school's work, and particularly the way the school keeps their children safe. However, returns indicate some concerns about most other areas, particularly the school's communication about their children's progress, and the support given to them to help their children's learning. A small minority have concerns about the management of students' behaviour. Inspection findings agree with this concern and the majority of parental views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lealands High School 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 192 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 900 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	18	123	65	23	12	8	4
The school keeps my child safe	31	16	136	72	17	9	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	21	93	49	43	23	10	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	17	116	62	26	14	4	2
The teaching is good at this school	18	10	127	68	25	13	7	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	11	103	55	45	24	10	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	9	121	64	33	18	3	2
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)	31	16	115	61	25	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	12	117	62	28	15	7	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	13	98	52	44	23	11	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	9	99	53	38	20	9	5
The school is led and managed effectively	19	10	114	61	23	12	11	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	16	115	61	25	13	7	4

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



11 June 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Lealands High School, Luton, LU3 3AL

I would like to begin by thanking you all for welcoming me and my four colleagues to your school on the 9 and 10 June. During the two days we spent there we visited many of your lessons, met several of you, looked your work, and looked at questionnaire responses from a cross-section of year groups.

We found the overall effectiveness of your school to be satisfactory with several good features. You told us that you develop good personal qualities, have a wide range of opportunities in sport and receive good support - and we agree. There are three areas we felt your school could improve further.

These are:

- to improve your GCSE results even more, particularly stretching you to reach the highest grades you can, by helping you learn more independently
- to ensure you make at least good progress in all your lessons and that your learning is not hindered by the silly behaviour of a small minority of students
- to increase the thoroughness in which the school monitors and evaluates its promotion of equality of opportunity for everyone at the school, so it can better celebrate what it does well and plan more effectively for what it needs to improve.

In the absence of your headteacher, your deputy headteachers are working hard to ensure your school makes your experience of education enjoyable and worthwhile. The staff at Lealands want you to succeed. You can, of course, contribute to improvement by behaving consistently well, practising your spelling and working as hard as you can in all lessons to achieve your very best.

Thank you again for your help in this inspection. I would like to wish you all the best in your studies and every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

Her Majesty's Inspector

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