

Shoeburyness High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115210
Local Authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	338537
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Roger Whittaker

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1622
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Knight
Headteacher	Mark Schofield
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by six additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 55 lessons, observing 42 teachers, and held meetings with staff, governors and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, department reviews, minutes of governors meetings and monitoring data in relation to students' progress and the quality of teaching. The majority of time was spent on looking at learning. Inspectors received 122 parent questionnaires, 100 student questionnaires and 188 staff questionnaires.

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

- students' progress in lessons and the evidence the school has to support their evaluation that students are making good progress
- what the school has done since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that work is more sharply focused on students' knowledge of what they can do and how to improve their work
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management, to see if they are rigorous enough in order to make improvements.

Information about the school

Shoeburyness High School is a larger than average comprehensive school with specialist status for technology. Numbers on roll in the school including the sixth form are rising. The number of students eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The majority of students are of White British heritage, and a small proportion are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities including those with a statement of special educational needs is higher than found nationally. The school is a Training School and a full service Extended School.

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

Shoeburyness High School is a good school that has made significant improvements since the last inspection. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and the monitoring of progress have led to better achievement. Students, given their starting points make good progress and are particularly successful at GCSE, attaining results that are in line with national average. They leave school well prepared for the transition to work, college or other training.

Students are exceptionally well cared for as a result of the outstanding level of care, guidance and support they receive. Arrangements for safeguarding students are good. The school treats each student as an individual and makes sure that they are able to make the best of opportunities offered. The rigour of the leadership and management in securing improvements since the last inspection demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Despite the significant improvements that have been made, some areas of inconsistency remain. The school has accurately identified these in its self-evaluation and set them as priorities in its improvement plans. Teaching and learning is now good overall, but there remain some inconsistencies in the use of strategies to ensure that students know what they can do and how they can improve. Also, lessons, including some in the sixth form, do not always ensure that students develop the skills they need to become independent learners.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Remove remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - increasing opportunities for students to work independently, extend their thinking and take responsibility for their learning
 - ensuring that students are made aware of what they can do well and how they can improve
- Ensure that sixth form students make better progress by:
 - Using data more rigorously so that the school knows more about the progress being made by all students
 - Improving the functional skills of students, especially literacy.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students join the school with attainment that is below average. By the time they leave,

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the majority have attained average standards at GCSE. There has been a trend of improvement in the number of students gaining at least five GCSEs at grade C or above since 2007. As a result, in 2009, the number of students gaining at least five GCSEs at grade C or above had surpassed national average. However, the number of students gaining five GCSEs at grade C or above including English and mathematics, while on an upward trend, did not quite reach national average in 2009. This was as due to some changes in staffing in English and mathematics, which have now been addressed by the school.

Students' attitudes to learning and their ability to apply themselves in lessons are good. This is reflected in the good progress they made in lessons observed during the inspection. The rate of progress students make over time has been improving and is now good. The significant improvement in attainment in 2009, and the projections for 2010 based on interim modules and test results, supports this. The progress of individual groups of students, including boys, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number of students from minority ethnic groups is in line with the overall rates of progress.

Students demonstrate many positive attributes in their personal development. They show good understanding of how to be safe, a view which was supported by parents. Bullying incidents are rare and students are confident that there is always a member of staff to talk to should the need arise, Behaviour is generally good and the number of exclusions has been reduced. However, in a very few lessons a very small minority of students disrupt learning. Students' successful adoption of healthy lifestyles is reflected in their high participation levels in extra-curricular activities.

Students are effective members of their community, and are involved in the wider community, for example through dance and music performances at local homes for the elderly. The specialist technology college status has contributed well to links with feeder primary schools. The number of students who progress to employment, further education or training on leaving school has been increasing steadily and is above the local authority average.

Attendance has improved year by year and is now above national average. Students have good awareness of the value of diverse cultures and of moral, spiritual and social issues, as a result of their involvement in a range of activities including international links with Bulgaria and Mozambique. The school recognises the need to further develop links with schools in the United Kingdom that have different socio-economic and ethnic communities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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' 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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching was good in the majority of lessons observed, enabling students to make good progress. Good relationships between students and teachers were evident, creating a very positive environment for learning. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects and transmit their enthusiasm to the students. In the best lessons teachers use a range of learning styles which engage and motivate students. For example, in a well-planned English lesson, a teacher creatively used a modern version of Romeo and Juliet, so that students could demonstrate, through role-play, an understanding of the emotions experienced by the characters. Students have a good understanding of their targets and most teachers use assessment effectively to plan lessons and to monitor students' progress closely. Despite many strengths in teaching observed during the inspection, there remain some inconsistencies. In some lessons, students did not learn as well as they might because opportunities were missed to promote their independence. Teachers do not always tell students what they needed to do to improve.

Since the last inspection the school has continued to develop the curriculum to ensure it more effectively meets the differing needs and aspirations of all groups of students. The wide range of courses includes fast-track AS levels, BTEC, apprenticeships and a diploma in creative and media, enabling older students to move on to the appropriate pathways post 16. The school has used the specialist status to enhance its vocational options through close work with partners, including a number of local colleges and employers.

Students and their parents and carers are full of praise for the care and support

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provided by the school, and they are confident that the school is preparing students exceptionally well for their future. Students are known as individuals, and a strong pastoral structure supports intervention where necessary. For example, students have access to a number of important external support agencies in addition to the school's in-house expertise. Evidence was seen of the excellent provision made for students who have diverse and challenging needs. Very effective transition arrangements ensure that students who join Year 7 settle into their new school quickly and smoothly. A parent, reflecting the positive views of many others, commented 'Pastoral care at Shoeburyness High is excellent and really benefits my child'.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The drive and enthusiasm of the outstanding headteacher and senior leadership team has focused the school on raising standards through creating a culture of high expectations that both staff and students support. The success of this is reflected in the willingness of staff to improve their practice. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities throughout the school, and systems to ensure that staff are held accountable for their performance. The school continuously strives to develop its work to ensure that students achieve as well as they can. However, there is still some variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school and the progress made by students in the sixth form. The school's self-evaluation has identified appropriate areas for improvement and suitable plans have been put in place to tackle inconsistencies. The school's technology specialism is well managed and used to enhance partnerships with local schools and the wider community.

The views of parents and carers indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the school. Attendance at school functions, such as 90% of parents and carers attending a parents' and carers' evening, is good. The school provides regular reports to parents and carers about their children's progress and consults them on major issues regarding changes to the school. Extensive and highly effective partnerships enhance the school's provision to contribute to the achievement and well-being of students. The school's promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding and, for example, no groups of students under-perform to any significant extent. The school's approach to community cohesion is good and it recognises the need to link with schools and communities across the United Kingdom and abroad. Such links have been well fostered and enabled students to

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develop a good understanding of multi-cultural society. Governors know the school well and continue to provide good support. They are increasingly challenging the school to explain actions and outcomes. Safeguarding procedures are good and involve effective record keeping, which is constantly reviewed and closely monitored.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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

Shoeburyness High School sixth form is highly inclusive. All students are made welcome, whatever their prior attainment or needs. Overall, attainment on entry is below what would be expected for the various courses available to students. Students make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Year 13 their results at A level are below national average. However, in some vocational courses results are in line with national averages. Staff have identified that attainment is higher in some subjects than others and are putting in place strategies to ensure that they address any areas of underachievement. Recent school data confirms that students' progress in Year 12 is improving as a result of these measures. Learning and progress seen in lessons was at least satisfactory, and in some lessons good or better. This is as a result of the improvements taking place in teaching and learning across the school.

Students' personal development is good. Sixth formers play an important part in school life. They act as good role models for younger students and support their development, for example, by acting as reading mentors, counsellors or running school clubs. They are justifiably proud of the significant amounts of money they raise for charities. They feel respected by their teachers and are able to influence decisions which affect them.

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Students spoke highly of the quality of advice and support they receive from staff, with many citing this as one of the principal reasons which influenced their decision to stay on for the sixth form. There is early intervention whenever underachievement is detected. The curriculum offers a broad range of courses, and is continuously reviewed and adapted to meet the needs and interests of students. Retention rates are improving as a result of the school's priority to provide levels of qualifications that best serve all its students and meet the employment opportunities in the local area. Greater effort is now being made to match and prepare students for the courses they select. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. The most effective lessons are characterised by teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects and the interesting range of activities they provide to engage and motivate students. In other lessons the pace is slower, there is less emphasis on developing students' ability to learn independently, and literacy skills are not well promoted.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory. The school has not used data rigorously enough to know about the progress being made by students. However, it recognises this and has taken steps to improve the monitoring of performance data, students' attendance and the quality of teaching, all of which are beginning to have a positive impact on students' learning experiences and outcomes.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Those who did were highly positive about the education their children received at Shoeburyness High School. However, a few say that the behaviour of a small minority of students disrupted learning. Their views support the judgements made by inspectors, particularly in relation to how well the school prepares their children for the future.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shoeburyness 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 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1622 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	34	71	58	8	7	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	49	40	69	57	3	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	79	65	39	32	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	35	66	54	8	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	44	36	72	59	5	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	29	79	65	5	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	26	79	65	8	7	1	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)	39	32	74	61	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	30	74	61	9	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	26	66	55	14	12	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	14	85	70	13	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	38	67	55	6	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	46	58	48	6	5	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



28 April 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Shoeburyness High School, Southend-on-Sea SS3 9LL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and talking to you, and were impressed with the maturity with which you answered our questions. Yours is a good and improving school and that you are right to be proud.

These are the main findings of the inspection:

The standards you reach at the end of Year 11 are in line with the national average and prepare you well to move on to further education or training.

You contribute to the school and wider community well.

Your attendance is above average and the majority of you make good progress.

Most teaching is good and you are given opportunities to be involved in interesting activities.

Staff take outstandingly good care to ensure you are looked after well and supported through the school.

Your headteacher and senior staff are enthusiastic and committed to improving the work of the school so that you achieve as well as you can.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements:

Ensure that in all lessons you are given opportunities to work independently and made aware of what you are doing well and how you can improve.

Make better use of the data to ensure that those of you in the sixth form make better progress. We would also like you to focus on improving your literacy skills.

Yours sincerely

Roger Whittaker

Lead inspector

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