

# Ellis Guilford School and Sports College

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 122828             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Nottingham         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 340223             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 14–15 January 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Elaine Taylor HMI  |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Secondary                                 |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                     |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 1318                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                        |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mr Michael Archer                         |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr Peter Plummer                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 4 October 2006                            |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Bar Lane<br>Old Basford<br>Nottingham     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0115 913 1338                             |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 0115 913 1341                             |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 36 lessons and held meetings with staff and groups of students. They also held telephone conversations with a representative of the governing body and several with other organisations with whom the school works. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, records, students' books, 123 parental questionnaire returns and those from staff and students.

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

- the current achievement in mathematics, and that of boys and the students who follow alternative courses in Key Stage 4
- the impact of initiatives to improve the quality of teaching
- how well the school's leaders use the information from monitoring to develop the provision and improve the outcomes for students.

## Information about the school

Ellis Guilford School and Sports College is a larger than average secondary school which is continuing to grow. Approximately a fifth of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few use English as an additional language. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well above the national average. As a result of sports college status, the school's sporting facilities have been significantly enhanced and these are used extensively by the local community in the evenings and weekends. It holds the Healthy Schools Gold Award, Sportsmark and was a winner of the National Outstanding Literacy Initiative Award.

**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

One of the school's aims is to be challenging, rewarding and valued. It meets this aim well, having developed outstanding features and has good capacity to improve further. The school's ability to improve is seen in the way standards have risen, particularly in mathematics and in the improved outcomes of some aspects of students' personal development. They are especially health conscious and make an outstanding contribution to the life of their school and to others in the area. The school has improved its systems for gathering information on students' progress and all leaders are using the data more effectively to inform their development planning. Teaching is good as at the previous inspection.

The effectiveness of leadership has improved. The headteacher and his senior team provide excellent leadership and have been instrumental in improving the consistency of leadership at all levels. New posts have been created and well-targeted professional development opportunities have been provided. Governors continue to support the school well. Rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are effective in ensuring leaders at all levels have a very accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Discrimination is countered especially well by the excellent promotion of equal opportunities that has produced a culture of tolerance, acceptance and support.

Attainment is broadly average. When students enter the school, their standards are well-below average, particularly in reading. As a result of good teaching and a determined and imaginative approach to improving literacy, they make good progress. They develop excellent personal qualities and a positive attitude to their studies. The majority move on to full-time education when they leave.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons well and develop very positive relationships with their classes. Occasionally, the lessons have the fast pace, central role for student participation and regular challenge for the most able that characterise outstanding teaching. There are not enough lessons where activities are matched closely to the wide range of needs in the class. Teachers do not make regular and systematic use of assessment techniques to check how well students are progressing and adjust their teaching accordingly.

A major strength of the school's provision is the outstanding curriculum it offers. The school makes every effort to ensure students have the opportunities they need to enjoy and achieve. Extensive use is made of partnerships with other providers to extend what is on offer. The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, visits and trips is greatly appreciated by parents and students. The community and the school benefit enormously

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from the contribution of the school's specialist status as a sports college.

Through excellent care, guidance and support systems, students show confidence, feel safe in school, enjoy learning and, above all, make an outstanding contribution. For instance, they contribute to improving the provision in the school through participation in departmental reviews and the design of new school buildings.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and convert more satisfactory teaching into good, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - use the information they have on students' progress to plan lessons that offer appropriate challenge to all levels of ability
  - use a range of techniques during lessons to measure and increase the progress of the students.

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

**2**

The school sets challenging targets for the students and at least meets and often exceeds many of them. Boys do not make quite as much progress as girls, but in many subjects the gap is closing or has closed. There are individual cases of significant success particularly for some of the school's high number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The excellent curriculum ensures almost all students leave with some form of worthwhile qualification. Students from all ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language achieve equally well. One parent took the trouble to write to inspectors about her son's examination success. She said: 'I was both amazed and delighted as I never thought he would even pass an exam let alone gain a level C.' Current progress and standards confirm that achievement continues to be good.

Students' personal qualities also develop well, with some features being outstanding. Their good personal development reflects the excellent care, guidance and support provided, which enables them to feel safe and makes them aware of strategies for ensuring personal safety. Healthy lifestyles are promoted with excellent success, especially through sports provision. Behaviour is good. In very dangerous weather conditions during the inspection, students behaved with great care and consideration for others. Attendance has improved greatly. These things confirm students' positive attitudes and the enjoyment they show in most lessons. Many avenues exist for them to contribute to the life of the school and local community and their response is outstanding. Students regularly support local primary schools and other students in their own school. The skills they develop continue when they move on to sixth form, where many mentor new students from their old school as they arrive. These attributes, coupled with practical, academic and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, help ensure good preparation for future economic well-being.

Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students are reflective

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and very much capable of empathy with the suffering of others. Their moral and social awareness is evident in their responsible attitudes and desire to contribute. Links with other countries and special events to celebrate different cultures contribute well to their cultural understanding. Different groups within the school mix happily together showing mutual respect.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

### How effective is the provision?

The school has helped staff to improve the quality of their teaching through regular and focussed professional development. A coaching group assists in the sharing of the best practice. The quality of teaching remains better in Years 10 and 11 than in the lower part of the school. Teachers make good use of new technologies, including ICT, to engage and motivate students. New posts of responsibility in each subject area have been created to support the use of information on students' progress which the school collects. Where the initiative has been very successful is in assisting subject leaders to target additional support very accurately and raise standards. This is starting to have an impact on teaching, but the use made of the information in planning students' work is

<sup>1</sup> 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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still a weaker feature of some lessons. Activities are planned in a logical sequence with clear reference to what students are aiming to learn. In less successful lessons all students undertake the same tasks - whatever their level of prior attainment. Some excellent examples were observed of teachers using astute questioning techniques to check the progress that students were making and adjust their teaching accordingly. The curriculum very effectively meets the needs, interests and aspirations of students. It provides rich opportunities for high-quality learning and wider personal development. Sports College status has been instrumental in expanding the range of courses on offer both within the curriculum and after school. This has had a beneficial impact on the students' understanding of how to stay healthy and on their enjoyment. Through these opportunities they have been able to develop their leadership skills. There is a focus on basic skills in Key Stage 3 that meets the learning needs of the students well. Personalised curriculum programmes enable the school to provide flexible learning opportunities for all students. The school invests much energy in assessing the needs and interests of the students and then providing highly tailored learning programmes in Key Stage 4 to meet them. In order to improve reading, various imaginative initiatives have taken place and these have been tremendously successful, often being recognised at a national level.

One of the school's most successful areas is its care, guidance and support arrangements. These provide positive and clear direction about expectations on behaviour and very effective support for all students, especially the most vulnerable. The holistic approach to caring for and supporting students is highly effective. Students thrive in the safe and supportive environment. There are strong links with parents and carers and with outside agencies.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>1</b> |

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders at all levels are highly committed to the vision of the headteacher for the school and its continuing improvement. Staff are well motivated, morale is high, and they have high expectations of the students. High quality target setting leads to students making good progress and at times achieving levels beyond the challenging targets set. Departmental reviews play a vital part in this, because they are thorough, detailed and lead to improving outcomes. Teaching is regularly monitored and there is a high level of accountability for the achievement of all students in each lesson. In addition every

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member of staff has a school priority on which to focus. This highly effective practice has resulted in higher levels of expertise, but considerable staffing changes have slowed the improvement across the whole school.

The school is successfully working to increase the involvement of parents. Parents experiencing family difficulties can use the drop-in facility held every fortnight. There is highly effective collaboration with local primary schools and other education and business partners. Ethnic groups are well represented on the governing body, which provides good support and challenge to the school. Governors have a wide range of experience and expertise which they bring to the role. They have ensured the school has good safeguarding and child-protection systems.

The impact the school makes on community cohesion is very good locally and good at a national and global level. There are links with communities abroad and an impressive number of visits to different areas of the country expand students' awareness of diversity. The systematic, planned approach to global issues such as poverty or religious diversity is more limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 1        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are very supportive of the school. Although the sample only represented approximately one tenth of the school population, parents' appreciation of all aspects of the school's work is obvious from their responses. They appreciate the approachable staff and their awareness of the individual needs of the students. Several spoke of the strong support they receive if there are any problems. The school's successful aim to



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raise aspirations is reflected in the comments made of students' raised ambitions and keenness to participate in the wide range of opportunities. The small number of negative comments related to the quality and availability of the food in the canteen and to some variability in the quality of information received from the school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ellis Guilford School and Sports 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 inspector received 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1318 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 52             | 42 | 63    | 51 | 7        | 6 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 42             | 34 | 74    | 60 | 6        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 52             | 42 | 63    | 51 | 4        | 3 | 3                 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 56             | 46 | 60    | 49 | 6        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 51             | 41 | 65    | 53 | 4        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 41             | 33 | 71    | 58 | 8        | 7 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 38             | 31 | 74    | 61 | 9        | 7 | 0                 | 0 |
| 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 | 70    | 57 | 5        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 35             | 28 | 78    | 63 | 9        | 7 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 35             | 28 | 75    | 61 | 9        | 7 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 30             | 24 | 78    | 63 | 5        | 4 | 5                 | 4 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 48             | 39 | 64    | 52 | 7        | 6 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 53             | 43 | 65    | 53 | 4        | 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| 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.**



15/1/2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Ellis Guilford School and Sports College, Nottingham, NG6 0HT

On behalf of myself and the other inspectors who visited your school this week, may I thank you for helping to make the two days both enjoyable and useful. The contribution you made by sharing your ideas with us was very valuable. The pleasant way you greeted us and made us feel welcome was delightful.

We think your school is good and has some outstanding features. You make good progress as you move through the school and are to be congratulated on the standards you attain. It is commendable that so many of you choose to continue with your education beyond Year 11. We think the contribution you make to the school and to the local community is outstanding. You also develop an excellent understanding of how to be healthy. Your behaviour is good and you told us you feel very safe. You are developing good skills to help you in your future working lives.

The school helps you with these achievements by providing you with an excellent range of subjects and courses that are very closely matched to what each of you needs. You receive good teaching and excellent care and guidance. These aspects of what the school provides are so good because the headteacher and other school leaders are doing an excellent job in leading and managing the work of the school.

Several aspects of the school's work have improved since inspectors visited three years ago. We think the school is well placed to continue to improve. You can help in this by attending regularly and making sure you understand how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.

We have asked the school to make sure teachers:

- provide you with activities in all lessons that are matched to your individual needs
- check regularly during each lesson how well you are progressing and adjust what they ask you to do so you make even better progress.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector

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