

Turves Green Girls' School and Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103499
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	354336
Inspection dates	5–6 July 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	722
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Councillor Les Lawrence
Headteacher	Richard Andrew Crookes
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Turves Green Northfield Birmingham
Telephone number	0121 464 8346
Fax number	0121 464 2318
Email address	enquiry@turvgng.bham.sch.uk

Age group	11–16
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2010
Inspection number	354336

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 33 lessons involving 30 teachers, held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation documentation, minutes of the governing body's meetings and school publications. Inspectors also took account of 59 questionnaires from parents and carers, 138 from pupils and 50 from staff.

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

- the school's assessment and tracking data to see if the evidence supports the school's self-evaluation of good students' progress
- the quality of teaching and learning, to judge the impact of the school's initiatives to improve the consistency of good teaching
- the consistency of leadership and management, at all levels, in addressing the need to raise standards.

Information about the school

Turves Green Girls' School is a smaller than average size comprehensive school with specialist status for technology. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are White British, with only a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, has reduced and is now slightly below average. The school has been through a significant period of changes in staff, especially at middle management level, since the last inspection, and the current headteacher took up his post in 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Turves Green Girls' School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Attainment is average and progress satisfactory although in 2009 attainment dipped significantly below national average in mathematics and science. Though pupils did well in other subjects they underachieved in these areas. Behaviour was also an issue and exclusions were high. Well thought out strategies for improvement are now having a positive impact on provision and on outcomes for pupils. The good curriculum and care, guidance and support ensure that the courses provided and the help pupils get meet their needs well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Pupils are effectively engaged in lessons; their behaviour and attitudes to learning are now good. Attendance is now above average. Attainment in mathematics has risen to average for present Year 11 pupils and in science standards are starting to rise. The recent track record of improvements illustrates the school's satisfactory capacity not only to sustain current levels of performance, but also to improve further. Self-evaluation is sound; strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and used to set priorities in the improvement plan. However, whole school and subject targets are not all sufficiently challenging and there is too much variation in the way pupils' progress towards the targets is tracked within subject areas.

Although teaching has improved, there remain some inconsistencies in the way progress is evaluated in lessons and feedback given, and the extent to which learning activities are matched to pupils' capabilities. The school's monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning does not always focus enough on the learning seen during lessons, and opportunities are sometimes missed to help pupils learn independently.

Pupils' personal development is one of the school's strengths. They are effective members of the school and the wider community, taking on important roles in community improvement schemes. Pupils have a good awareness of the value of diverse cultures and of moral, spiritual and social issues as a result of involvement in a range of activities, including international links with a community in South Africa. This has led, for example, to pupils forming a school gospel choir which performs in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is good or better in at least 75% of lessons by:
 - using assessment information to plan learning outcomes and set activities that challenge pupils appropriately
 - evaluating pupils' progress in lessons and giving them clear feedback so that

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

they know what they can do and how to improve

- planning lesson activities so that pupils to develop the ability to work independently
- Extend and refine existing systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching by focusing more on its impact on the learning of pupils seen in lessons.
- Ensure consistency in the quality of leadership and management by improving the systems and procedures for target setting and tracking and evaluating the progress made by pupils against targets.
- 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**

The present Year 11 pupils are on track to achieve beyond the school's targets for five A* to C grades including English and mathematics at GCSE, and so reach standards broadly in line with national averages. The progress of groups of pupils, for example those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, is in line with the overall rates of progress. A recent focus on raising achievement for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has accelerated their progress to reach that of their peers.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their ability to apply themselves in lessons are good, and there are examples of high motivation. They show the ability to reflect and are good at working together. In an English lesson they worked in pairs with great concentration and enthusiasm developing persuasive speech, stimulated by videos of world leaders. In many lessons pupils have an understanding of their targets and when they are given work that is structured and challenging, they show a developing capacity to work independently. They demonstrate good skills in literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) across a range of subjects. They have a good understanding of future career paths and the world outside the school.

Pupils demonstrate many positive attitudes in their personal development. Parents were keen to say that their children have a good understanding of how to be safe. Bullying incidents are rare and pupils are confident that there is always a member of staff to talk to if the need arise. Most pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. However, there are still a few pupils who demand close and effective management by the teacher in order that they do not disrupt the learning of others. The number of exclusions has reduced dramatically.

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.

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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?

Improvement in the relationships between pupils and teachers is creating a more positive environment for learning which is resulting in more rapid progress over time. Many teachers are knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects and transmit this enthusiasm to the pupils. In the best lessons teachers use a wide range of activities, which engage pupils in their learning and use assessment to plan lessons and to monitor pupils' progress closely. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to use focused questioning to evaluate how well pupils are doing and to tell pupils what they do well and how to improve. Teachers do not always plan activities that take into account how well pupils' understanding is developing and give enough challenge to the more able. The school has developed the courses it offers to ensure it more effectively meets differing needs and aspirations of all pupils. Pupils comment very positively about the range of opportunities available to them, both within the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities. There is a good choice of options available, with strengths in areas of the specialist technology status. Increasing use of cross-curricular developments has helped pupils to link ideas and so extend their learning, particularly in literacy and ICT.

Pupils and parents are enthusiastic in their praise of the good care, guidance and support provided by the school. Pupils are known as individuals, and a strong pastoral structure supports intervention, where necessary, through good links with outside agencies. The school makes good provision for pupils who have diverse and challenging needs to ensure they are able to participate fully in what the school offers. Effective transition arrangements ensure that pupils who join Year 7 settle into their new 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

quickly and smoothly. Effective systems are in place to promote attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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 and the deputy headteacher have a clear vision for further improvement of the school and have identified appropriate priorities to achieve this. Most staff understand fully what the school is striving to achieve and are committed to these goals. The dip in results was due, in the main, to a period of significant changes in staffing both in middle management and among teachers. There school is aware that work remains to be done to ensure subject leaders and managers are all contributing effectively to the drive towards improvement, and in taking appropriate steps to achieve this. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for leaders and managers at all levels, and there is a sound programme of monitoring lessons. However, the focus in lessons on teaching rather than its impact on learning can mean that subtle omissions that slow learning can be overlooked.

The school is ambitious for pupils who might otherwise be disadvantaged. Improved assessment procedures, are now being used by senior leaders and pastoral heads to monitor pupils' progress and to target pupils at risk of underachievement across subjects. Good engagement with parents and carers is seen in the increasing numbers who attend school functions and engage in consultation about changes being made by the school. The school's specialist technology status is being well used to raise the profile of technology in the school and to encourage strong partnerships with schools and businesses in the area.

The school has embedded effective systems to ensure a good approach to community cohesion. The school effectively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. These build on strong links with the communities both locally and world-wide, enabling most pupils to experience communities which are different from their own. The governing body are very supportive of the school. However, they have not done as much as they could to challenge and hold the headteacher and staff to account for the actions and outcomes. Safeguarding procedures are all in place and record keeping is constantly monitored and reviewed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	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	3

Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents responded to the questionnaire. Those that did were very positive about how well the school keeps their child safe and most said that their child enjoyed school. Inspectors endorse these views expressed by parents. A small minority of questionnaire indicated concern over liaison with them as parents or carers, about behaviour, or about the attention given to ensuring their children are healthy. The inspection team judged that the school now offers good opportunities to parents to be involved and responds well to any queries. It found that the very small amount of unacceptable behaviour seen during the inspection was generally well managed by the school, and that pupils are taught well about factors that affect health and many pupils adopt healthy lifestyles.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Turves Green Girls School and Technology 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 722 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	32	32	54	7	12	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	32	37	63	3	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	31	32	54	8	14	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	39	27	46	6	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	17	29	33	56	7	12	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	17	31	53	11	19	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	17	32	54	11	19	5	8
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)	15	25	34	58	8	14	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	19	37	63	9	15	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	22	31	53	11	19	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	15	31	53	15	25	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	15	25	30	51	12	20	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	36	28	47	9	15	1	2

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.



7 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Turves Green Girls School and Technology College, Birmingham, B31 4BP

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 with you. Yours is a satisfactory school.

These are the main findings of the inspection.

You make satisfactory progress so standards you reach at the end of Year 11 are in line with national averages.

Your attendance has improved and is now above average.

You contribute well to the school and the wider community.

The teaching is satisfactory but in many lessons you are taught well and are given opportunities to do interesting things.

You told us staff 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 can progress and achieve as well as you can.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

Remove remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring that activities challenge you to achieve as well as you can and you get better feedback on how you are doing. You can help by making sure you always know how to improve.

Refine the systems for monitoring the quality of lessons by checking how well you learn in lessons

Improve the way different subjects track your progress.

I wish you well for your future.

Yours sincerely

Roger Whittaker

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.