

Endon High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124401
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	292983
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Smith HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	725
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Stretch
Headteacher	Lynn Spedding
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001
School address	Leek Road Endon Stoke-on-Trent ST9 9EE
Telephone number	01782 502240
Fax number	01782 502473

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Endon High school is a smaller than average specialist mathematics and computing school. It serves a semi-rural area to the east of Stoke-on-Trent from which a significant number of pupils travel to the school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who are learning English as an additional language is well below average. Pupils generally come from areas of social advantage but a significant number come from areas of social disadvantage. The school is a centre for pupils with physical disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Endon is a good school which meets its aim well for the vast majority of pupils 'to enable and encourage all our pupils, whatever their ability, to achieve their potential through academic, social, cultural or physical experiences'. Pupils feel very well supported by the good care and guidance from staff, so that they make good progress with their work and personal development. One parent commented that her daughter had 'come on leaps and bounds since joining the school'.

Standards are well above average in both key stages. Achievement has improved this year and is now good. Accurate school records show that learning has improved and most pupils now make good or better progress towards their challenging targets, although some pupils do less well than others. The school has been effective in raising achievement in mathematics after GCSE results fell last year.

Pupils report that there are very few bullying incidents and when these occur they say they are dealt with effectively and swiftly. They feel very safe in school and they are all confident that they have a member of staff to whom they can turn for advice and support. Pupils understand very well the need to keep themselves healthy. They are encouraged to drink water and many pupils eat the healthy meal options. Pupils commented that the cycle shed is not big enough because so many of them cycle to school. Even though there is limited space for physical education on the school site pupils enjoy a large variety of sporting activities, including a wheelchair basketball team, which enables physically disabled and able bodied pupils to play alongside each other. The walk to the school playing field wastes valuable lesson time but there are now toilet facilities at the site which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is good and both staff and pupils commented that the specialist school status has been pivotal in improving the overall quality. Pupils and staff often make good use of the whiteboards and the improved information and communication technology (ICT) facilities and this aids learning and maintains pupils' interest during lessons. Assessment information is generally used well so that work is well matched to the pupils and they are informed about how to improve. However, in some areas teaching does not make as effective use of either assessment or the whiteboards to support learning and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to work independently.

Subject leaders have closely monitored the work of their departments to identify areas for development and then improved the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils say that behaviour has improved and is good; any areas of weaker behaviour are usually when some pupils do not become fully engaged in their learning. There are very few exclusions and pupils value the recognition and rewards for good work and behaviour. The good curriculum meets pupils' needs well and issues identified in the previous inspection regarding the amount of time for religious education and ICT within Key Stage 4 have now been rectified.

The designation of the school as a mathematics and computing specialist school has had a major impact on the ethos and character of the school. There are good opportunities for extended learning in the specialist subjects and through excellent links with the community. These links include a wide range of support and involvement which is mutually beneficial for the pupils and the community, including the hosting of a high quality community website and the enrichment derived by pupils in the involvement with the local building society.

Good leadership and management have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and raising the level of achievement within the school. The accurate self-evaluation, including inputs from departments, pupils and governors, has been used to target areas for further development and along with the recent improvements, which now need consolidating, demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further. Good subject and pastoral leadership ensures departments and year teams are well organised and subject leaders feel empowered to lead their areas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the good practice in teaching is disseminated across all areas, particularly with the use of assessment and new technologies and teaching methods that maintain the pupils' interest.
- Build upon the raised achievement seen this year by consolidating improvements in learning, through encouraging the skills of independent learning and ensuring all pupils consistently make good or better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with standards above average for their age. In 2006 standards at the end of Key Stage 4 were well above average. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more higher level GCSE passes including mathematics and English was very high compared to national figures. Pupils' achievement has been average for the last few years but the accurate tracking in place shows that their progress has increased and achievement is good or better for most pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties or those with physical disabilities achieve well.

In 2006 standards in Key Stage 3 tests were significantly above average in all subjects but results in English fell from the level of the previous year. The department has carried out a careful analysis of these results to target areas of weakness and as a result standards have risen this year. Good use has been made of the Assessing Pupils' Performance materials from the Secondary National Strategy to help with these improvements.

The school is not complacent and it analyses results carefully to see how it can improve on previous years. The new system to track pupils' progress and ensure they are working effectively towards their challenging targets is used well to identify any underachievement and to challenge individuals quickly, as well as reward pupils who are making good progress. The school has identified middle attaining boys as a group who have been performing less well than others and has put in appropriate intervention strategies to ensure their work improves. It also has a comprehensive overview of how pupils have completed coursework and organises targeted support to make sure that pupils' coursework is at least in line with their target grade. The school was close to meeting all its challenging targets last year, including those for its specialist school status.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils feel very safe and have positive attitudes towards their studies and about how the school cares for them. They comment about how well adults respond to the few incidents of bullying. They also feel that the actions to combat problems with drug and alcohol abuse help them to make mature and sensible decisions. Spiritual

and moral education are good and pupils are encouraged to think deeply about issues, for example, the reasons behind climate change or the influence of contemporary poetry in English. Social development is good and pupils generally behave well. However, a small number of pupils can disrupt school life for others in lessons, which is a concern for some parents.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the local community through their involvement in a wide range of activities. This also supports their good cultural development. They appreciate their opportunity to influence school decisions through the school council.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and this is evident in the good attendance, with little difference between year groups. Enjoyment is also evident in lessons and pupils say that they appreciate the range of opportunities the school provides for them. They are involved in a wide range of physical and extra-curricular activities that suit all needs. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to become healthy, and they show this by making healthy eating choices and drinking water regularly, including during lessons.

An emphasis on the acquisition of key skills, especially problem solving skills, helps prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being. This is further supported by working in partnership with a local building society to enhance personal finance understanding and an extensive work experience programme. However, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to work in groups or independently.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Very good relationships between pupils and teachers are used well to engage pupils and support good learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to lessons and as a result of good teaching, make effective progress. Good subject knowledge is used well to enthuse pupils along with high quality questions to assess their learning. Responses are used well to match the work to their levels of understanding, or as a focus for further teaching. Lessons are very well planned but the delivery does not always match these plans, especially when activities overrun and insufficient time remains to consolidate learning.

Good use is made of teaching assistants to support learning and whiteboards are used well in most lessons. Pupils are generally provided with good feedback on how well they are doing and what to do to improve; they are often encouraged to be involved in their own and peer assessments. Diagnosis of individual needs is good and often used well in lessons to make sure work is well matched to pupils. However, this is not consistent across all lessons and in some, assessments are not used carefully, and to explain clearly how pupils can improve. In some lessons pupils have limited opportunities to work collaboratively or independently, especially when the teacher's explanation is too long and pupils become disinterested.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well, particularly those with either learning or physical disabilities, with very well focused work to meet their individual needs. The proportion of pupils studying a language in Key Stage 4 is well above average and the ability to study two different languages in Key Stage 3 provides a good basis for this.

Good use is made of assessment information to make sure pupils follow appropriate courses in Key Stage 4. A variety of courses are available and increasing use is made of working with other schools and colleges to extend the options available. This meets local needs well, although as yet there is only a limited take up of vocational options. All pupils study religious education in Key Stage 4 with the majority completing a GCSE qualification, an improvement from the time of the last inspection. As part of the specialist school status all pupils study statistics as well as mathematics and good plans are in place to introduce 'study plus', an option to support targeted pupils to gain a higher level GCSE pass in mathematics next year. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught by specialist teachers and is seen as enjoyable and relevant by pupils and is effective in supporting their personal development.

The school provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended. Pupils receive certificates at the end of Year 11 to celebrate their contribution to the school and the activities they have attended during their time in the school. A large number of pupils receive peripatetic music lessons whilst a similar number take part in very well received school productions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good because a combination of pastoral and academic support enable pupils to achieve standards that are well above average. All adults who work in the school are committed to providing the learning environment that allows pupils to flourish, and the school provides sufficient staff time and expertise to ensure the effective safeguarding and well-being of pupils. Pupils enjoy acting as mentors and this is successful. The induction of pupils into the school and their transition between phases of education are very well planned and pupils commented how well they thought they were prepared for the next phase of their education or the world of work. One parent was extremely pleased with the school when her child entered it later than other pupils, and from abroad. The school works well with a variety of different agencies to ensure pupils' personal well-being.

Generally pupils know what level they are working at and what they need to do in order to improve and reach challenging targets, which they all know, although this is not consistent across all areas. Many lessons make clear links between the expected level of pupils' work and the learning activities that will help them improve. This approach is used very well in English and is contributory to the department's academic improvement and success. Procedures to identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving or in need of additional support are effective. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and records show that they make good progress.

Pupils with physical disabilities are very well integrated into the life of the school and very good support for these pupils is provided by their designated teaching assistants so that they take a full and active part in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The effective headteacher and senior team give a clear steer and direction to the school to ensure improvements to the progress pupils make and their achievement. These improvements need to be consolidated so that all pupils consistently make

good or better progress. Middle leaders have a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses through effective departmental reviews, which include inputs from pupils. They have built upon information from these reviews to improve the quality of lessons and raise standards.

Leaders at all levels, including governors, effectively monitor the work of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Appropriate areas for development have been identified and used to formulate a clear improvement plan which is based around the five main areas of Every Child Matters. The strong focus on improving teaching and learning and raising standards now ensures that pupils have equal opportunities to succeed, and most do. The strong input from pupils into school evaluations through obtaining their views makes them feel that they have ownership of developments and that they are valued. The school works hard to gain the views of parents and to ensure they are fully informed of developments within the school.

Governance is good and rigorously challenges and supports the school. Resources are deployed well and the school has demonstrated good capacity to improve further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 June 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Endon High School, Endon, ST9 9EE

We visited your school recently and met with some of you at lunchtime and talked to others during lessons and around school. We were very pleased with the friendliness you showed us and how helpful you were. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed school and we agree that you attend a good school.

Staff support and guide you well, which helps you to make good progress in the school and achieve very well in GCSE examinations. Standards are well above average. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed the after school clubs available and also how you enjoyed the many sports opportunities offered. We agree that the walk down to the school playing field is a pain but I was impressed how the group I followed walked down there quickly and sensibly to reduce the amount of time wasted. We were impressed with the work you did with other schools, and some of you, with younger pupils in your own school.

Teaching is good and you enjoy a large number of lessons. Behaviour is generally good but a small number of you misbehave in lessons and disturb your friends and classmates. You can help yourselves and your fellow pupils by behaving better.

Many of you have a very good understanding of what you need to do to become healthy and you thought the school helped you follow a healthier lifestyle. We were particularly impressed with the work you do within the local community. The curriculum is good and really meets your needs well, especially those of you who have physical disabilities. You value the work done in Years 10 and 11 and it was good to see how many of you opt for a language.

We feel your school is well led and that it has a good understanding of its main strengths and areas which it needs to improve. Like all schools we feel there are areas it needs to improve further:

- Ensure the good practice in teaching is disseminated across all areas, particularly with the use of assessment and new technologies and teaching methods that maintain the pupils' interest.
- Build upon the raised achievement seen this year by consolidating improvements in learning, through encouraging the skills of independent learning and ensuring all pupils make good or better progress.

We wish you well in this very supportive school and thank you again for your cooperation.

Michael Smith HMI