

The Toyndbee School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116411
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326386
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Angela Corbett HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1050
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jeff Steer
Headteacher	Mr Matthew Longden
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 April 2006
School address	Bodycoats Road Chandler's Ford Eastleigh, SO53 2PL
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors. The inspectors observed 24 lessons; visited several others; and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students and spoke to parents by telephone. They observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans and policies. In addition, 151 parental and 712 student questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- The attainment, progress and learning of students in different subjects and for different groups of students.
- The strengths in the personal development of students.
- The effectiveness of systems to improve teaching and the use of assessment.
- The extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of and motivates all learners.
- The contribution of leadership and management at all levels to school improvement.

Information about the school

Toynbee is an averaged-sized school which gained specialist Sports College status in 2003. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2009. Over 90% of students are White British. The proportion of students from ethnic backgrounds is increasing but very few are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school has a specialist resource unit for students with visual impairment. The school has gained a number of awards including Sportsmark and International School status.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In this harmonious and inclusive school students are well cared for and supported. The large majority of students are positive about the school, and value the numerous opportunities offered by the sports specialism and the good curriculum. An overwhelming majority say that they feel safe. Most students have a good understanding of how to adopt and live a healthy lifestyle. Students participate well in all aspects of school life, taking on leadership roles that include running the school council, and as prefects and peer mentors. However, their contribution to the wider community is mostly through the sports specialism. Students behave well, develop a clear sense of right and wrong, and show good respect for each other. Visually impaired students are particularly well supported and integrated into all aspects of life, and make good progress.

Students make satisfactory, and some good, progress from their starting points, reflecting the variations in performance between some groups of students and subjects. For example, performance in history, art and media is good, while in mathematics it is satisfactory. Overall, attainment is broadly average. Current assessment information and evidence from lesson observations indicate that the decline in standards seen in 2008 has been reversed.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but the proportion of good or better teaching is increasing. In these lessons teachers make good use of time, promote independent learning and challenge students. However, such good practice is not shared across the school. New systems are in place to monitor its quality accurately, although their full impact has yet to be realised. Most students know their targets and how well they are performing, but are less clear on the specific actions they need to take to achieve or exceed their targets.

The new headteacher is providing clarity of vision and clear strategic leadership. This is helping senior and middle leaders to focus more on evaluating accurately performance in all aspects of school life and on improving the outcomes for all students. The impact of recent improvements can already be seen in the rising standards, which have resulted from the focus on improving teaching and learning, increased rigour in monitoring student performance and raising expectations of what students can achieve. Middle leaders are beginning to grow in their confidence and ability to hold themselves and their teams to account for the achievement and well-being of students. This demonstrates that the school's current capacity for

improvement is satisfactory.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop teaching to ensure that all students make good or better progress in their learning by consistently:
 - making the best use of time in lessons
 - developing independence in learning through group work
 - improving literacy and numeracy through all subject teaching for students of all abilities
 - sharing good teaching practices across the school.
- Make better use of assessment information to:
 - set more precise student performance targets
 - ensure teaching meets both individuals' learning needs and provides challenge
 - provide students with specific actions about how to improve
 - give leaders information about trends in attainment and progress.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels focus sharply on the intended outcomes for different groups of learners by using measurable targets against agreed timescales.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The progress made by students, including those with visual impairment or other learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in the lessons observed varied between good and satisfactory, according to the quality of the teaching. Similarly, the quality of students' behaviour in the lessons was directly related to the effectiveness of teaching. Where teaching was good, students' behaviour made a stronger contribution to learning.

Standards at the end of Year 11 are broadly average. The proportion of students achieving five A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, fell in 2008. Progress overall was satisfactory; however, some students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities underachieved. This was in contrast to the good achievement of students in the Visual Impairment Unit and some less enthusiastic learners. Current school data suggest that students are on track to achieve their targets in 2009.

Students are confident and articulate and have positive attitudes to learning; almost all say that they enjoy school. Of particular credit to the school is the good personal development of students in the Visual Impairment Unit. Attendance is satisfactory; while it is good for some year groups, it is particularly low in Year 11. Behaviour

around the school is good. A calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school, which helps to ensure that all students, including the most vulnerable, feel safe in school. All the students spoken to during the inspection felt confident that any bullying would be quickly dealt with and that they could always seek the help of staff or peer counsellors.

Students' moral and social development is good. Many make a positive contribution to the life of the school through the responsibilities they take on. The large and well-respected school council is led and managed by a junior leadership group. They actively seek the views of fellow students and the impact of their work includes changes to the uniform and to dining and toilet facilities. However, students' contribution to the local community is mostly linked to the sports specialism. For example, junior sports leaders organise activities for younger students at local primary schools. Students' cultural understanding at an international level is good but it is less well developed at the local and national levels. Opportunities for students to reflect on the world around them and on their own learning are limited. Students are well prepared for each stage of their education at the school and beyond; however, basic skill development is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	3

How effective is the provision?

Typically, teaching is satisfactory because the quality is inconsistent across the school. An increasing proportion of lessons are good as a result of actions to monitor and improve their quality; however, good practice is not routinely shared between subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and most lessons are planned with a clear focus on what students are expected to learn. Positive relationships between students and staff, and effective deployment of teaching assistants, result in a productive and purposeful atmosphere in most lessons. Some good examples of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

students working effectively in pairs to discuss and promote each other's learning were seen during the inspection; however, group work is underdeveloped. Less successful lessons tend to be too teacher-led; lack pace, challenge and variety; and do not sufficiently stimulate or promote independent learning. Opportunities for students of all abilities to develop and apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum are often missed.

Student progress is carefully tracked against their increasingly challenging targets and is used to identify underachievement, although the use of data to inform and target intervention fully is underdeveloped. Teachers regularly assess students' work, so that they know how well they are performing. However, students are less clear on what steps they need to take to achieve or exceed their targets. Teachers' use of assessment data to inform lesson planning, their use of questioning to probe and develop students' knowledge and understanding, and students' self-evaluation of their learning are inconsistent across the school.

The curriculum, which has improved since the last inspection, is now well matched to students' needs and aspirations and is enriched by the sports specialist status. The Key Stage 3 curriculum has been reviewed, and there are now some accelerated learning opportunities for students in Year 9 to begin their GCSE courses in mathematics, English and ICT. At Key Stage 4 flexible pathways meet the needs of all students well. There are a good range of academic and vocational courses, including single science options and diplomas provided through a partnership with local schools and the college. Participation rates are high in the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities, many of which relate to the sports specialism. The curriculum is further enhanced by trips, visits, visitors to school and revision sessions.

Staff know the students well and work hard to provide them with good care, guidance and support. Very effective systems are in place to monitor the well-being of all students and identify concerns. Support and care, including that for vulnerable students, is very well tailored to their needs through good liaison between staff in school, with parents and, where necessary, with outside agencies. Overall provision for students in the Visual Impairment Unit is good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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 recently appointed headteacher is providing new drive and vision for the school, and the staff are already united in following this lead. The school's vision of 'personal best' is reflected in the diversity of its provision and in its active approach to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination, for example, for students in the Visual Impairment Unit or through the provision of a wide range of

extra-curricular activities related to sport. As one student said, 'There is something for everyone, regardless of how good you are at sport.' However, progress is variable across the school but satisfactory overall. The use of target setting to raise academic achievement is improving, with stronger use of data, greater emphasis on higher expectations for all students and closer monitoring of their progress. The school places high value on its work with parents and communicates satisfactorily. There are particularly good links with the parents and carers of vulnerable students. Good collaboration and partnerships with other schools, colleges and external organisations broadens and personalises the experiences offered to students, particularly at Key Stage 4. However, while there are good links with local primary schools in relation to sport and the transition to Key Stage 3, cultural understanding at local and national levels is not sufficiently promoted. This reflects the fact that the school is in the early stages of developing its overall approach to promoting community cohesion.

Leadership skills at all levels are developing and staff are keen to respond to recent initiatives. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. However, the impact of improvement planning is limited because targets are often too descriptive and not sufficiently focused on measurable outcomes for different groups of learners.

Governors provide good support. They are developing their expertise in evaluating all aspects of school performance and increasingly provide effective challenge.

Safeguarding procedures, including risk assessments, are secure and well maintained. The school has made appropriate checks on all adults who work with the students, and ensures that its single central record of such checks is regularly updated.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents were supportive of the school, although a small minority indicated concerns about how well the school helps them to support their children. Around half

of parents made written comments. A significant number of these expressed their support for the new headteacher and noted the improvements he had already made in the school. There was no specific trend or pattern to the majority of the issues raised by the parents who expressed their concerns in writing. A small minority raised concerns over the quality of teaching and communication. All these issues are commented on in the report.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Toynbee School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 151 completed questionnaires; one did not tick a response to the question below. In total, there are 874 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	65	7	1

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007–8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007–8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007–8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
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. In 2007–8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
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.

23 June 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of The Toyndbee School, Eastleigh, SO53 2PL



On behalf of your inspection team, I would like to let you know that we enjoyed the time we spent with you on our recent visit. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for completing the student questionnaires and sharing your views with us in meetings and lessons and around the school. We think that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education and is working to improve further.

We hope that you will take the time to read the full report but I have highlighted the key points below.

- Teaching is satisfactory and improving. We agree with you that lessons are not always sufficiently interesting or challenging.
- You make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in lessons.
- The standards you achieve by the end of Year 11 are broadly in line with the national average.
- Most of you enjoy school. In some year groups attendance is good, but it is below expectations in Year 11.
- You know your targets and how well you are doing. However, you are not always clear about what actions to take to improve.
- You are confident and polite students. You behave well, show respect for each other and value the school's inclusive ethos.
- You appreciate the opportunities provided as a result of the school's specialist sports status and participate well in the numerous sports-related activities.

Your new headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to improve the school, and have already started to do this. To help the school improve, we have said that senior leaders should:

- share the best teaching practices across the school so that you make better progress in your lessons
- make better use of assessment data so that teaching matches your learning needs and provides you with specific actions about how to improve your work
- focus the school's development planning to raise both your academic and personal achievement.

You can help by attending well and being actively involved in your learning. Good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Angela Corbett
Her Majesty's Inspector

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