

Bebington High Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105106
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336427
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Mr Jim Kidd

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	861
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Preston
Headteacher	Mr Brian Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 31 lessons taught by 29 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, staff and the Chair of Governors. There were no meetings held with parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's development planning, monitoring documentation in relation to students' progress and attainment and reports written by the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors also analysed 108 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 132 completed by students and 27 completed by staff.

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

- whether improvements in achievement, suggested by data, are being maintained
- the impact of the school's strategies to improve students' performance in mathematics and science
- the level of challenge in lessons and whether it is sufficient to encourage students to reach the highest standards
- the involvement of middle leaders and governors in bringing about the school's improvement
- the impact across the school of specialist status as a sports college.

Information about the school

This school is slightly smaller than average size. It is situated in the south-east area of the Wirral. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above that usually found. The percentage of students from minority ethnic heritages is below average but rising. There are few students who are at early stages of learning English. The school has held specialist status as a sports college since 2001. Bebington High is an accredited Healthy School, holds the Sportsmark award and has intermediate International Schools status. The school hosts a unit funded by the local authority to support students with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). It is also registered as a full-core extended school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an improving school which provides a satisfactory quality of education for its students. The care, guidance and support they receive is outstanding and students themselves say, 'Our school is now much better than when we were inspected before.' Its specialist status as a sports college pervades every aspect of the school's life and it also has a significant impact on the local and wider communities. The school, therefore, demonstrates good value for money.

Students achieve satisfactorily overall but, as a result of excellent support from teachers, teaching assistants and year managers, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. Attainment has risen year on year since the previous inspection and is now broadly average. Attainment and progress in English are particularly impressive and students' achievement is good here. Following a dip in attainment in mathematics, well-targeted strategies to raise standards are having a positive effect and students are on course to gain better results than ever before in this subject. The school has identified accurately that achievement in science lags behind that in the other key subjects and is using to good effect the expertise of teachers in the specialism to support developments in the science department.

Students have a high regard for their school and for the adults who work with them. They feel safe, behave well and are only too keen to support each other. They enjoy the vast array of extra-curricular activities, sports and games which are open to them and have a keen understanding of what makes a healthy diet and of why regular exercise is so important.

The quality of students' learning is satisfactory overall and there are examples of where it is good and even excellent. However, good and exemplary practice in teaching is not always shared effectively across the school. Moreover, challenge in lessons is inconsistent, activities are sometimes too teacher-led and methods do not always lead to students trying things out for themselves.

The school is justly proud of its accurate evaluation of performance in all aspects of its work and there have been significant improvements in a variety of areas since the previous inspection. These improvements, together with strong leadership at senior level, perceptive leadership within specialist status and a middle leadership group

which is proactive in expressing its views about how the school can move forward, demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of students' learning by:
 - establishing more effective systems to identify, share and embed good and exemplary practice in teaching across the curriculum
 - ensuring that challenge in the classroom is consistently high enough to encourage students to aim for the highest standards
 - ensuring that teachers offer students more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning
 - ensuring that activities are matched precisely to the learning objectives of the lesson and capture students' interests and motivation.

- Raise achievement in science by:
 - continuing to involve teachers from the school's specialism in supporting the science department
 - ensuring that teachers' planning is based on an accurate assessment on how well students are progressing
 - further developing the science curriculum by introducing courses which are matched even more closely to the needs and interests of students.

About 40% of 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

In most lessons students enjoy the activities and are eager to make progress. They behave well and are generally engaged in their learning. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent across subjects, partly as a result of activities which are not always matched closely to students' interests. Students' prior attainment on entry to the school is variable over time but is generally below average. Improvements in attainment since the previous inspection demonstrate students' satisfactory progress from their starting points. Progress in science is less convincing but there are signs that the school's deployment of staff from the specialism to support and advise teachers within the science department is having a positive impact. There is evidence that attainment is now beginning to rise.

Almost two fifths of students in the current Year 11 classes have already reached GCSE grades C or above in both English and mathematics and students' progress in English is consistently good over time. Progress in mathematics is improving apace and inspection evidence shows that students are on course to reach their challenging targets in this subject. Fewer students than nationally reach the highest grades of A and A* and the school recognises that more-able boys, in particular, are not always challenged effectively enough to reach the standards of which they are capable. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, however, achieve well because of the outstanding care and guidance they receive from the adults who work with them.

Students get on well with each other and are keen to support their classmates when difficulties occur. They comment that bullying is rare in school but that when it happens, staff are approachable and the school takes students' concerns seriously. Their conduct in lessons and around the school site is good and inspectors were impressed by the courtesy shown to them by students from all years. Their confidence and self-esteem are rising and they believe that the school's reputation in the local area improves each year. Students have an enviable social conscience and members of the sports council speak with pride about the work that sports and community leaders do to support their fellow students, pupils in local primary schools and also disabled youngsters in the community. Students also show real enthusiasm for learning about the world around them and they have a good awareness of cultures and religions which are different from their own. They sat enthralled during assemblies when moral dilemmas were discussed and told inspectors, 'Doing the right thing is often difficult but we must try to do it all the time.' Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is, therefore, good. Attendance is satisfactory but improving.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and the use of assessment are satisfactory but there are examples of good and outstanding practice in both key stages. The extent and quality of progress data which teachers now receive are improving and the school is looking to ensure that planning, for example in science, is informed by an accurate evaluation of students' achievement. In the best lessons, an outstanding Year 8 session on the 'Fosbury Flop' for example, students are given responsibility for their own learning and are challenged realistically to aim for the highest standards in their work. Similarly, in some English and drama lessons, students work independently and are not afraid to take risks in their learning. On occasions, however, there is too much direction by the teacher of learning, and activities do not always match the interests of students and motivate them to try their best. In these lessons

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

expectations of what students can do are sometimes not high enough and they do not reach the levels of attainment their ability warrants.

The curriculum is well planned and organised and makes a positive contribution to students' personal development. The school places great emphasis on providing and developing a curriculum which is increasingly more closely matched to students' needs. Staff recognise, for example, that if achievement in science is to continue to rise, new courses need to be introduced to meet the interests and aspirations of students. Some courses, the BTEC for example, have already been established and they are proving popular with students who say, 'We enjoy the new course because it is going to help us get the jobs we want.' Curricular provision for students in Year 7 eases their transition from the primary school and helps them to develop appropriate personal and learning skills. There is an outstanding range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, many of which stem from the school's specialist status as a sports college; take-up is high. An impressive number of students represent their county and country in a range of sports: they speak about this with pride but also with the utmost modesty.

Pastoral care is outstanding and is a major strength of the school. It does not remain within the environs of the school but, through initiatives such as Adopt a Club, it continues at the end of the school day when teachers encourage and sometimes help students to join local clubs, with a view to raising their self-esteem. The successful MLD unit and the emphasis adults place on ensuring that students are integrated into the life of the school are other examples of the school's overriding concern to ensure that Bebington High is an inclusive community. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported exceptionally well and make good progress in their studies. Vulnerable students are identified rapidly and accurately and they too receive bespoke support.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

At all levels of leadership, teamwork is of the essence and the headteacher, ably supported by a talented and committed senior team, works tirelessly to drive ambition and to raise the aspirations of staff and students alike. The leadership of the specialist subject is similarly impressive and ensures that specialist status lies at the heart of everything the school tries to do. Middle leaders are fulsome in their praise for the opportunities they have to make suggestions as to how the school can improve further. In their words, 'Our senior leaders have a genuine open door: we feel respected, valued and empowered.' The leadership recognises that, if the quality of students' learning is to continue to rise, there need to be more opportunities to share good and outstanding practice in teaching across all subject departments. The newly constituted governing body is becoming more involved in gauging school

performance. Links with departments are enabling governors to challenge the leadership at all levels with increasing rigour. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are of the highest order and fully meet current national requirements.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good at local, national and global levels. The school works hard to understand its ever-changing intake of students and specialist status is successfully involved in applying for additional funding to develop community activities, including training, for young people and adults in the surrounding area. In addition, there are good partnerships with a range of schools and other institutions for the benefit of students. Links with parents and carers are positive too and the school is regarded as approachable and willing to help if difficulties occur. The school is committed to inclusion and tackles discrimination whenever and wherever it occurs; its promotion of equality of opportunity is, however, no better than satisfactory because challenge in lessons is not always high enough to ensure that more-able students, in particular, reach the highest grades in GCSE.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

This is a satisfactory but rapidly improving sixth form. Students' prior attainment on entry to Year 12 is below average but students achieve satisfactorily across both years. Attainment in A-level examinations is below average but improving. Students make a positive contribution to the whole school community, supporting their younger counterparts in sport, art and literacy for example. The impact of specialist status ensures that their contribution to the wider community is equally impressive: community sports leaders are actively involved in organising and running a wide variety of events for primary schools and local community groups.

Curriculum development has seen the introduction of a range of courses to meet the individual needs of students and there is a blend of BTEC and A-level programmes. Students value the care, guidance and support they receive and have the utmost confidence in their teachers, speaking positively about the subject knowledge of the staff. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but the level of challenge in lessons is not always consistent.

Significant improvements in provision and in outcomes for students over the past four years or so have been brought about by perceptive leadership and management. Leaders place great emphasis on meeting the individual needs of students and modify the curriculum regularly as a result. Proposed changes are firmly based on robust systems for monitoring, recording and reporting on students' progress in both their academic work and their personal development. The positive impact of leadership and management is clear: students themselves say that membership of the sixth form raises their self-confidence and provides them with a wealth of opportunities to support others.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth Form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are entirely satisfied with what the school is doing for their sons and daughters. They are particularly pleased with the care, guidance and support their offspring receive and comment: 'This is an open school. Any concerns we have are always dealt with and our children are supported really well.' They are also delighted with the opportunities provided by specialist sports college status, a view endorsed by the inspection team. A very small minority of parents and carers believe that the school does not help them to support their children's learning effectively enough. Inspectors found no evidence to support this view. A very small minority also believe that their offspring are not making enough progress. Inspectors judge students' progress to be satisfactory but agree that it could be accelerated, particularly in science.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bebington High 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 inspection team received 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 861 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	34	63	58	4	4	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	42	39	59	55	5	5	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	54	50	47	44	3	3	3	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	27	65	60	12	11	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	29	67	62	9	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	32	51	47	11	10	6	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	30	64	59	7	6	3	3
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	36	56	52	9	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	36	60	56	5	5	4	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	39	52	48	9	8	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	32	60	56	6	6	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	45	42	55	51	5	5	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	45	51	47	5	5	3	3

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 all 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 pupils' 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.



29 April 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Bebington High Sports College, Wirral, CH63 2PS

Thank you so much for your wonderful welcome and for your kindness to us when we visited your school recently. We are particularly grateful to the six groups of students who came to talk to us. You represented your school and your families very well indeed and you have every reason to feel proud of your achievements. You were all so keen to find out how the inspection had gone that we just had to write to you!

Bebington High provides you with a satisfactory education but the school is improving all the time. Your results in English are good and they are improving in mathematics. You behave well in and around school and many of you take part in activities organised through specialist status as a sports college, some of which benefit young people and adults in the local community. The adults who work with you provide outstanding levels of care, guidance and support and older students, often from the sixth form, support younger students really well too. Your teachers at all levels of responsibility are as proud of the school as you are and the vast majority of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to Bebington.

In order to help your school get even better, I have asked your teachers to improve the quality of your learning by sharing good and excellent practice in teaching to all staff. I have also asked them to match the activities in lessons more closely to your interests and to give you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves. Your standards in science could improve and so I have discussed with your teachers a few ways in which this could happen, for example by them planning lessons based strongly on how well you are doing and on what you like in science. You can help here by always giving of your best!

Thanks again for your contribution to the inspection. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Jim Kidd
Lead inspector

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