



Calday Grange Grammar School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105112
Local Authority Wirral
Inspection number 287128
Inspection dates 6–7 November 2006
Reporting inspector Judith Tolley

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Grammar School Lane West Kirby, Wirral Merseyside CH48 8GG
School category	Foundation	Telephone number	0151 6252727
Age range of pupils	11–18	Fax number	0151 6259851
Gender of pupils	Boys	Chair	Mr John Robertson
Number on roll (school)	1417	Headteacher	Mr Andrew Hall
Number on roll (6th form)	494		
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–18	6–7 November 2006	287128

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Calday Grange is a larger than average selective grammar school for boys. It has a large mixed sixth form. Most students are from White British backgrounds. The school takes its students from more than 40 feeder primary schools in the area. The vast majority of students continue their education in the sixth form. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is low, as is the proportion that has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Very small proportions of students are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has both Technology College and Languages College status, Sportsmark Gold award and Investors in People. It hosts the Able Student Centre for the area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are exceptionally high and represent outstanding achievement. Personal development is outstanding; students develop into confident, mature young people who make a full contribution to the school and wider community. Students' attitudes towards their learning are exemplary and this, coupled with excellent teaching, is an important factor in enabling them to achieve highly. Through the impact of its specialist subjects, the school regularly exceeds its targets for academic standards and for its specialist status.

The curriculum is exemplary, as are the opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Students are able to follow a very wide range of interests both in lessons and beyond the taught curriculum. The vast majority of students attain high standards in at least ten subjects by the end of Year 11. The school makes excellent use of the expertise and resources afforded by its specialist status in technology and languages to provide outstanding opportunities both across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities for students to pursue their interests and achieve excellence. They study a wide range of languages, take part in residential visits abroad and have access to a broad range of technology courses and enterprise activities. Students take full advantage of this and thrive as mature young adults in a community focused closely on their needs and aspirations.

Care, guidance and support for students are very effective and the relatively new pastoral system supports students very well. Behaviour is exemplary overall and in lessons. Links with outside agencies, primary schools and universities are excellent and support and enhance the work done by the school. As a result, students settle quickly when they join the school and are very well informed for the choices they make.

The outstanding leadership and management are underpinned by a clear, shared vision based on full consultation and rigorous, accurate and honest self-evaluation. Students, teachers and support staff continually strive for excellence and celebrate achievement. New initiatives are carefully considered and their impact upon student progress closely monitored. Governors provide excellent support and challenge to the school. Meticulous financial management ensures the school provides excellent value for money. It is for these reasons that the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good with many outstanding features. There is a strong sense of community in the sixth form and mutual respect between students and teachers. Students are mature and confident young adults who make a commendable contribution to the general life of the school. The leadership and management of the sixth form are very effective in promoting the personal and academic development of students. Thorough procedures ensure that students receive excellent guidance and support as part of their preparation for life after the sixth form.

Students are appreciative of the 'open door' facility given by their teachers to discuss work or any concerns. Their work is closely monitored and they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Students' attitudes to study are exemplary. This is reflected in their noticeable high levels of enjoyment and concentration in lessons. Consequently, they achieve well and attain standards that are well above the national average. The quality of teaching is good overall. Much of the teaching is outstanding and a particular strength of all teaching is the teachers' thorough command of their subject. However, in some lessons students are not always given enough opportunity to explore and develop ideas for themselves.

The sixth form curriculum is outstanding. It provides students with an extensive range of choices that enables them to follow a very broad and balanced programme that meets their needs. Expectations are high and students usually study at least four subjects to advanced level. This provision is enhanced by a rich and varied menu of extra-curricular activities. The match of the curriculum to students' needs is reflected in the excellent levels of retention on courses and the very large majority who continue into higher education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase opportunities for sixth form students to explore and develop ideas for themselves in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students enter the school with well above average standards. Their results in tests and examinations at the end of Years 9 and 11 are exceptionally high. They make progress that is significantly better than most students of similar prior standards, reflecting their high levels of motivation and their teachers' excellent subject expertise. In Year 9, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are extremely high, as they have been consistently since the previous inspection. Provisional results for the 2006 national tests are the school's highest ever. In mathematics almost half gained Level 8, the highest possible outcome. Outstanding progress in Key Stage 3 leads to equally high outcomes at GCSE. Exceptionally high results in the core subjects are matched by equally high levels of performance in other examinations, such as the creative arts courses in drama, art and music, and in technology and languages. The contribution made by the specialist subjects to whole-school standards is outstanding. The school regularly exceeds its targets for specialist status and provides excellent value for money. Standards in the sixth form are well above average and improving as a result of recent initiatives. Students achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Students mature into self-assured young adults. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and underlies the excellent sense of community that pervades the school. Students' cultural awareness celebrates diversity exceptionally well, especially through the arts. Students have an excellent understanding of the need for healthy lifestyle choices and for regular exercise. Students express their views with confidence but, equally, listen to and respect the views of others. As a consequence, they are very well prepared for the rigours of life after school and for employment.

Very high attendance levels reflect students' obvious enjoyment of school life and all the varied opportunities offered. They are extremely well motivated and thirst to succeed and achieve. The resulting high levels of attention, which students show in lessons is a major factor in their exceptional progress.

Students are very proud of the school and loyal to it. Different age groups mix very well, for example, through the house system, and very good relationships are a notable feature within the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary.

The role of students in the sixth form in acting as helpers and senior prefects provides an excellent model of how to enjoy responsibility and opportunity. The school council is very influential and plays an important part in the life of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent in the main school and good in the sixth form. The teachers' considerable subject expertise and knowledge of examination requirements are major strengths. The students respect their teachers, value their knowledge and skills and therefore implement their advice. The students work with exceedingly high levels of commitment. Their very high standards in numeracy and literacy help them to understand new information very quickly. Students' enthusiasm is often caught by the teacher's obvious delight in the subject and through having many opportunities to think things through by themselves and with others. After one such lesson a Year 10 boy enthused: 'I love maths'. New developments in using data are leading to better tracking of progress by subject teachers, but the consistent use of assessment information in planning for the progress of individuals in lessons is still developing. In lessons and in their homework students respond enthusiastically to the challenges they are set and take feedback from teachers seriously. They take great pride in their work and produce work of a high calibre. However, teachers are not

consistently giving sixth form students opportunities to work in this engaged and open-ended way. Some teachers do too much of the work for the students instead of letting them work things out for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum fully meets the needs and aspirations of its students, resulting in excellent achievement. It is enhanced by an increase in the variety of technology and language provision through its specialist status. Students take advantage of the many opportunities to study a very wide range of languages; most follow two languages to GCSE courses and often study additional languages after school. Similarly the school offers a wide variety of technology courses both in the main school and the sixth form. Students in Years 10 and 11 can choose from a wide range of GCSE courses. The school also offers a vast array of post-16 AS and A2 courses. Befitting its specialist status, information and communication technology (ICT) is integrated very effectively across the curriculum and used as a tool to support learning. There is extra support for students identified as not achieving their potential or experiencing difficulties and a range of additional opportunities for gifted and talented students; this support leads to high levels of achievement for all students. Sixth form students benefit from a superb range of enrichment activities. Work-related opportunities are identified across the curriculum and supported by enterprise activities and work experience at home and abroad in the sixth form. In addition to the daily out-of-school activities, residential opportunities both at home and abroad ensure a rewarding and rich experience for students.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The excellent pastoral system in the sixth form is the model for that recently implemented in the main school. High quality care, guidance and support for individuals are at the heart of the arrangements and, although in the early stages of development, this system supports students extremely well. Systems to track students' achievement, progress and well-being are excellent.

Arrangements for safeguarding students are robust. Learning mentors work very successfully with small groups and individuals to build self-confidence and self-esteem as well as to improve their progress in lessons. Rigorous, well planned procedures ensure safe recruitment of staff, child protection and health and safety. Students say they feel safe and generally free from bullying. They trust adults and know where to turn for help. They appreciate the 'Text Someone' initiative. As one student said, 'It's a means of stopping bullying before it starts'.

The school works extremely well with many parents to help newcomers settle and to support children in times of stress or difficulty. Students are very well prepared to

make informed curriculum and career choices. Students in the sixth form appreciate the effective induction arrangements, the support they receive in preparation for leaving the school and the advice they are given when considering university placements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The work of the school is clearly focused on raising standards and ensuring all students achieve their best. The headteacher has a clear vision of the school's future development and has been courageous and determined in implementing new systems to achieve this. He has been very successful in creating a team with a common sense of purpose and commitment and an ethos where excellent achievement is valued and celebrated. New arrangements for pastoral care, for the monitoring and development of teaching and learning, and for the use of assessment data are all proving successful in raising standards even further. Through an extremely thorough, accurate and self-critical system of self-evaluation, coupled with full consultation with staff and students, the school constantly strives for and achieves excellence. Resources are used very efficiently and effectively to secure excellent value for money. Governors are very well informed and play a full role both in supporting and challenging the school. The impact is seen in the outstanding achievement of its students and reflected in its success in achieving a second specialism and its very good reputation in the community. Issues arising from the last report have been tackled successfully.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
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	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. However, first, I would like to thank you for your openness and your help during our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and appreciated your comments and opinions.

The inspection found that yours is an outstanding school. You are set challenging targets and examination results are very high. You make excellent progress as a result of excellent teaching and your excellent attitudes towards your learning. Your behaviour is exemplary in lessons. We thought the range of courses you are offered in Year 10 and the sixth form was outstanding, as is the variety of extra-curricular activities and visits you enjoy. The school council plays an important and influential role in the life of the school. Your tutors and teachers offer you very good support and the new pastoral system is proving successful in ensuring you are happy and can achieve your best. Leadership and management are excellent and all staff work hard so that you are well prepared for the future and the outside world.

We judged that teachers could give more opportunities for students in the sixth form to explore and develop ideas for themselves in lessons.

We left your school confident that it will continue to improve. We wish you every success in the future.