

South Wigston High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120310
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339672
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2010
Reporting inspector	David Muir HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	10–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	821
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Hughes
Headteacher	Gary Toward
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 31 lessons and 32 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, three governors, staff, including middle and senior leaders and representatives from some of the school's partnerships. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school improvement plan, safeguarding records and pupils' work. One hundred and ninety-six parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- the accuracy of the school's monitoring of pupil progress in all areas of the school
- how the school ensures that maximum progress is made during Year 6
- how the school's management ensures that expectations are consistent, from the start of Year 6, across all areas of the school and that standards are raised as a result of any interventions put in place
- how the curriculum meets the changing needs of all pupils, in both key stages, so that they are ready to transfer to the next stage of their lives.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average high school south of Leicester. The school has specialist arts college status. Pupils enter the school at the start of Year 6 and leave for upper school at the end of Year 9. The school has 11 feeder primary schools, with the majority of pupils coming from three local primary schools. The school takes a significant minority of pupils from outside the catchment area, mainly from the City of Leicester. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

South Wigston High School is an outstanding school which puts the needs of all pupils at the heart of its work. During their time in the school, pupils make outstanding progress and their personal development, including behaviour and attendance, are also exemplary. This is due to the exceptional level of care, guidance and support, and the excellent curriculum, including an impressive and extremely creative range of other activities which meet their needs outstandingly well. Nevertheless, the school continues to strive for even higher standards in all that it does. Staff have high levels of commitment and professionalism which enable the school to set and achieve ambitious targets. An impressive array of well thought out partnerships contributes outstandingly to the level of education and care.

The dynamic leaders in the school, led by the headteacher, set high expectations and lead by example. They provide drive, passion and vision which permeate through to all members of the school community. Ninety-nine per cent of pupils agreed that, 'The headteacher and senior staff in my school do a good job'. Staff, pupils, parents and governors alike are fully committed to the school and are proud to members of the school community. This is also shown by the staff, and parents' and carers' questionnaires which both show 98% approval of the overall work of the school. Pupils enjoy school, and are positive about all aspects of its work. They know their targets and what they have to do to improve their work over time and in lessons. A variety of visits and visitors and an imaginative range of residential visits support the curriculum very well in providing additional, high quality and inclusive learning experiences for pupils. The quality of teaching is good overall, with much of it outstanding. This, alongside the outstanding curriculum and quality of care, guidance and support, supports the outstanding progress made by pupils over time. The school's leadership is aware that there are inconsistencies in some areas of teaching, particularly planning, the setting of learning objectives and matching tasks to the variety of learning needs, which it has targeted for improvement. The joint lesson observations undertaken by inspectors and the leadership of the school show that there is a sharp awareness of the strengths and areas for development in this area.

The accurate view that leaders have of the school and the significant improvements evident since the previous inspection, demonstrate that it has outstanding capacity to continue to make sustained improvement. The dedicated governing body has an in-depth understanding of its role and there is clear evidence of the impact of its work in supporting and challenging at all levels of the school.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching so that more lessons in the school are outstanding by:
 - using the best quality planning in the school to model how planning can raise levels of attainment further in all subjects
 - ensuring that learning objectives are consistently shared in all lessons and are focused on the learning to take place in the lesson rather than on the activities
 - ensuring that all lessons have tasks and activities matched to the learning needs of all students.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils enter that school at the start of Year 6 with standards which are well below the national average. However, by the time they finish Key Stage 2, they have already made good progress and reach standards which are below national averages. When pupils leave Key Stage 3, they are working above national expectations. This shows that during their time in the school, they make outstanding progress overall. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make outstanding progress due to the very high quality of targeted support available to them.

The outstanding progress over time made by pupils is supported by the good quality learning and progress in lessons. The inspection evidence of learning and progress seen in lessons agrees with the school's evaluation at both key stages. The monitoring of groups shows that there is now no difference in the progress of any groups in relation to their starting points and abilities. The school has successfully focused on closing the gap between boys' and girls' progress. Pupils enjoy school and there is no evidence of bullying in the school. It is an exceptionally harmonious and warm community. Behaviour was outstanding throughout the inspection and this judgement concurs with the school's records. Pupils' work in the local community is exceptional, including an annual performance at the local 'Proms in the Park' concert. There are several innovations which contribute outstandingly to their personal outcomes. An example of this is the 'Head's Challenge', where pupils undertake physical activities of increasing difficulty. They start by organising a local walk with their parents and build up to spend a night under canvas on Kinder Scout to contribute to their achievement of the gold award. A range of activities are also organised which develop workplace skills, including financial workshops alongside 'Dragon's Den' and 'Apprentice' type activities. The school works actively to provide opportunities to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds, including through a developing partnership with a local high school in the city and visits to several different countries, which have helped to promote a very strong awareness of cultural issues. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong and are given ample opportunities to develop an awareness of themselves and others, which they embrace readily.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching seen during the inspection was generally good, although some outstanding and some satisfactory teaching were also seen. This matches the school's judgement over time. In the best lessons, the planning is clearly focused and a variety of learning objectives and activities are identified to meet the needs of all pupils. In these lessons, teachers are aware of the levels and abilities of all pupils and a good range of teaching styles are used to make the lessons exciting and engaging for all pupils. Pupils' learning is also enhanced by the effective use of information and communication technology and support staff who support groups and individuals very effectively. Pupils know their levels and what they need to do to improve their work. The best examples of marking and feedback show clearly how to improve work and to make more progress in learning. The outstanding progress over time, which pupils make, is supported by strong relationships, exemplary behaviour and the variety of tasks and activities in lessons. However, the stronger features of teaching are not consistent in all lessons.

The strengths of the outstanding curriculum, which also support the outstanding progress, are the imaginative and creative range of opportunities across the subjects

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

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and the range of personalised activities and courses, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at risk of disaffection. These opportunities include ASDAN (Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Living Skills, holistic therapy and allotment gardening. The art specialism of the school has also significantly enhanced the curriculum through the creation of many positive links with other local schools and colleges.

Other activities which are available are as diverse and exciting as they are memorable. They include the didgeridoo club, with its range of this type of instrument, the cricket club, table tennis, the Head's Challenge and the ever popular 'spooky school' sleepover where 'haunted' parts of the school become areas of wonder and fear in an unforgettable night of activities and adventure. There are visits to a range of destinations such as London, Iceland, Paris and the annual pilgrimage to Ypres in Belgium to pay respects at the Menin Gate to former pupils of the school who died in the First World War.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The outstanding senior leadership team, led by an inspirational headteacher, has developed a clear vision and climate for success which is shared, supported and promoted at all levels of the school community. This has led to the whole school community having a strong sense of purpose and exceptionally high expectations of all: staff, pupils, parents, partners and governors alike. This approach has been a key factor in the outstanding outcomes evident across the school.

The school sets and achieves ambitious targets in all areas. Staff questionnaires show that they feel valued in the contribution that they make to the school. Despite their continued success, the school staff and leadership, show great humility and are aware of the need to work hard to maintain standards at as high a level as possible.

Senior leaders and other staff have a good understanding of the strengths within the school and subject areas have clear plans for further improvement. However, the school has more work to do in supporting the consistency in the quality of teaching across all areas of the school. The school council is representative, demonstrating the inclusive ethos of the school. The school works hard to tackle discrimination, with equality of opportunity being at the heart of everything that it does. Any historical differences in the performance of groups of pupils such as boys and girls have been overcome, so that all

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groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress at the same outstanding level. The governing body is dedicated and committed to the work of the school. It provides outstanding support and challenge to the leadership of the school through its committee structure. The individual governors are extremely proactive in their involvement in the life of the school, attending all relevant functions and also providing support on school trips and residential visits. The views of parents and carers are actively sought by the school. There is an increasingly diverse variety of methods used to communicate with parents who are less involved in the life of the school to keep them well informed.

The school's work on community cohesion is good and the school's development plan shows that there are strategies in place to build further on this area, such as through the partnership with a local high school. The school's safeguarding procedures and policies, including child protection, are outstanding in all aspects and show that all adults working with pupils are appropriately recruited and vetted. The high quality leadership of the school's specialism is directly contributing to the success of the whole school in engaging and enthusing pupils, as well as the very effective implementation and evaluation of new curriculum areas.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Views of parents and carers

Of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, views were overwhelmingly positive in all areas. A very few minor areas of concern were raised, such as 6% of parents disagreeing that 'The school takes account of my suggestions'.

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However the inspection did not find any evidence to support these concerns, as many channels of communication are proactively used by the school. The evidence from the inspection supports the overwhelmingly positive view of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at South Wigston High School 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 196 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 821 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	84	43	107	55	4	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	105	54	89	46	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	103	53	86	44	7	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	89	45	99	51	6	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	93	47	100	51	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	36	114	58	9	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	33	121	62	8	4	0	0
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)	78	40	102	52	2	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	42	103	53	5	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	46	92	47	9	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	32	114	58	11	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	106	54	80	41	8	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	116	59	77	39	2	1	0	0

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.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Wigston High School, Wigston, LE18 4TA

I am writing to you on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently to say thank you very much for making our visit so memorable, interesting and enjoyable. All of our meetings with you around your school showed us that you have very impressive and positive attitudes to school and your learning.

During our time with you, we looked at a lot of evidence and talked to you, the school staff and governors and asked your parents for their views of the school. We also saw 31 lessons and after all that, we decided that your school is outstanding.

The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard to make your time in school very happy and successful. You enjoy school and you make excellent progress while you are there. By the time you leave school, you are working at above average levels and you should be very proud of that achievement. That is not all; you also develop outstandingly well in all areas of your personal development, including your behaviour, which was very impressive throughout the whole visit. Your parents and carers are extremely happy with how well the school educates and looks after you all. It was genuinely inspiring to see your confidence and self-belief. You work very hard to continue to improve your personal and academic skills and you clearly enjoy your lessons.

I have asked the school to improve in only one area. I have told them that your learning could be even better if the quality of teaching in the school was more consistent in all areas and that there was more variety in the levels of work in some of your lessons. You can help with this by continuing to work your hardest and letting teachers know what makes lessons and learning more interesting.

Once again thank you very much for the time you spent with us during the visit and we would like to wish you all the best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

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