

The Long Eaton School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136716
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	395316
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2012
Lead inspector	Elaine Taylor HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1266
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Gallimore
Headteacher	Neil Calvert
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
School address	Thoresby Road Long Eaton Nottingham NG10 3NP
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Age group	11–19
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Introduction

Inspection team

Elaine Taylor	Her Majesty's Inspector
Robert Pritchard	Additional inspector
Lenford White	Additional inspector
Kathleen Yates	Additional inspector
Peter McKenzie	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 43 teachers in 43 lessons, of which three were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, the school staff, including senior and middle leaders, and conversations were held with a group of parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, including a visit to the resource centre for autistic students. They looked at the school development plan; documents relating to monitoring procedures and evaluations of the progress students currently make; and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors analysed 165 parental questionnaires in addition to those completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average sized secondary school and became an academy in 2011. The proportions of students from minority ethnic groups, and those whose first language is believed not to be English are much lower than the national average. The proportions of students who are disabled or with special educational needs and of those known to be eligible for free school meals are also lower than average. The school has achieved the ECO School status, the Inclusion Quality Mark, Investors in People award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award and the International School Award. The school meets the current minimum floor standards required by the government. The enhanced resource centre, known as the ARC, offers specially resourced provision for students with special educational needs; this currently contains 10 students aged from 11 to 16 who have a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Leaders have taken decisive action and rectified the dip in performance in GCSE examinations in English and in mathematics in 2011. The vast majority of parents and carers are pleased with the progress their children are making. However, it is not yet outstanding because not all teachers consistently prepare activities that are imaginative and able to inspire students.
- From average starting points students make good progress and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 11. The small numbers of disabled students, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals all make the same progress as similar groups nationally. Good provision in the enhanced resource centre also results in good progress for these students.
- Teaching is good, ensuring students achieve consistently well in lessons. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for students to work in pairs and groups and discuss their learning. However, not all teachers plan to ensure group work benefits the personal development of the most-able students.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Their attendance is above average, especially in the sixth form. They feel very safe and parents and carers are very happy that the school keeps their children safe.
- Rigorous monitoring has enabled the school's leaders to take rapid and effective action in addressing the fall in standards in 2011. They have maintained high levels of staff morale while continuing to challenge weaker teaching. The very broad and interesting curriculum supports students' spiritual and cultural development well. Good relationships are modelled by leaders at all levels and permeate the school, making it a happy and productive environment.
- The sixth form is good. Teaching is always at least good and is often outstanding. As a result, standards are rising rapidly and students make

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satisfactory but increasingly good progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure even higher quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - ensuring a greater proportion of lessons are specifically planned to include imaginative tasks to inspire students
 - developing whole-school strategies to enhance the skills students need to work most effectively in groups.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment has been above average across the curriculum for the last three years, except in English and mathematics. Progress in these subjects was previously falling behind that in other subjects, but effective action, including a cross-curricular focus on literacy and numeracy, has resulted in progress in mathematics that is above the national average this year and in line in English. Reading standards are good and supported by reading clubs for all key stages organised by the school librarian along with good resources in the library. Attainment in science is well above average.

In over half the lessons observed, students were making good and sometimes outstanding progress. Students consistently display positive attitudes to learning and, in the most effective lessons, are inspired to work independently with curiosity and perseverance, especially in the sixth form.

Gaps in the progress of different groups relative to national averages are closing steadily. The small group of disabled students or those with special educational needs includes students who are supported through the enhanced resource centre. The specialist care they receive means they make good progress, although not enough attention is given to recording in detail their starting points in order to track their progress and raise it to outstanding.

Students make good and sometimes very good progress in foundation subjects. Until recently very few chose to study a modern foreign language in Key Stage 4. This has been addressed and numbers have risen substantially, preparing students for a wider range of opportunities in the future.

Quality of teaching

Teachers use their good subject knowledge well in lessons to set a range of suitable activities to meet the needs of all students. Relationships are good and the students' good behaviour means lessons move at a purposeful pace.

In the most effective lessons students are given a variety of activities and teachers

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check their progress and understanding carefully, adjusting the lesson if necessary. No time is wasted and teachers demonstrate model answers and methods to reduce the length of explanations. More-able students are challenged with open-ended questions that stimulate their curiosity and deepen their understanding and social development; one outstanding example was seen in a sixth form English lesson, where students were exploring language development in young children. Where progress is merely satisfactory, activities do not sufficiently enthuse or inspire the students. Assessment is not always well-timed and can, therefore, sometimes interfere with students' thinking. When this happens all students are required to complete activities and move on at the same time, meaning some have to wait and others move on too quickly.

Teachers frequently make careful use of the subject matter contained in resources in order to support students' spiritual and cultural development and to appeal to different groups. For example, in a Year 11 science lesson, students were totally engrossed by the exploration of the life of a star. The resources, including stimulating video clips, captured students' imagination and were expertly exploited to ensure the pace of learning was rapid for all. In addition, teachers were able to develop the students' literacy skills well as a result of their high expectations of students' ability to use meaningful and interesting vocabulary to good effect.

Individual teachers offer students opportunities to support each other and work collaboratively. However, some group work does not develop students' personal skills sufficiently because teachers fail to make clear their expectations of the different roles in the group. In particular, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend the leadership skills of more-able students.

Other adults in classrooms support students needing extra help effectively and students gave inspectors several examples of how this has led to good progress and achievement in a number of subjects.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Great attention is paid to keeping students safe at all times. Parents are confident that this is effective. Students are welcoming and polite and the corridors and social areas are orderly and very well cared for. Few examples of poor behaviour occur and exclusions are low. Attendance is above average and persistent absence well below. Students are punctual to school in the morning and to lessons. Sixth form students are very good role models for younger students with their mature behaviour, excellent motivation and very high attendance.

Very few examples of bullying, including cyber-bullying occur. Students are confident that any that do occur are dealt with effectively. Racist incidents are almost unheard of and the school operates as a socially cohesive unit. Older and younger students work together well and the house system supports positive links between year groups. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are integrated fully into the life of the school.

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A small minority of parents expressed concern that poor behaviour disrupts learning in some lessons. Where teaching occasionally fails to fully engage students they do let their attention wander but disruption is unusual.

Leadership and management

Leaders, including members of the governing body, have created a strong sense of shared responsibility for improving achievement among all members of the school community. Despite the changes necessitated by the move to academy status, staff morale is high. The senior leaders give clear direction for all staff development and a strong commitment to professional development for staff at all levels. Leaders use performance management accurately to identify individual strengths and to pinpoint strategies for further development. Strong leadership of the sixth form has led to rapid improvements that are continuing this year, with the result that standards are rising and teaching improving strongly.

Targets are challenging and ambitious. Leaders have a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching and manage performance effectively so that teaching continues to improve in quality. Middle leaders are supported and challenged appropriately so that areas of under-performance are successfully addressed.

The curriculum is broad and has many unusual and exciting features such as the astronomy course and the school's observatory. Provision in music supports students cultural development well, for example in additional lunchtime sessions which challenge and stimulate musical performance. Parents are very satisfied with the additional opportunities provided which have a very positive impact on students' cultural development and the progress of more-able students. A wide range of courses allows all students to gain qualifications and the sixth-form curriculum also offers options at a range of levels to appeal to all students.

The work undertaken to gain ECO school status and the International School award have a positive impact on students' cultural and social development. Many activities and additional opportunities strengthen this work and displays around the school keep the topics at the forefront of students' minds.

The school undertakes very effective work to engage parents and carers, including those who might find working with the school difficult. This includes strong support for the transfer from primary school, very well attended parents' evenings and the use of information and communication technology to share information.

All leaders work to tackle discrimination and promote equality through the curriculum, the house system and attention to individual needs. As a result, gaps in achievement for different groups are closing rapidly and all members of the school community work happily together. Effective safeguarding arrangements keep everyone safe.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



30 April 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of The Long Eaton School, Nottingham, NG10 3NP.

Thank you for the help you gave to us when we visited your school last week. This is what we found.

- The school is good and gives you many opportunities to study for a wide range of qualifications. We congratulate you on the above-average standards you achieve by the end of Year 11.
- You make good progress because of good teaching. Where the activities you are given are imaginative and inspiring, you make very good progress, but this is not the case in all lessons. Occasionally some of you are not motivated to work your hardest and some of you let your attention wander.
- You work well together in groups but we would like the teachers to give clearer instructions about what is required from the different members of the group, so that you will benefit even more, especially those who could lead the work.
- We were impressed by your sensible and welcoming behaviour around the school and your high attendance. You told us, and it is clear from your responses to our questionnaire, that you feel very safe.
- Those of you in the sixth form are making better progress than previous groups because teaching is better.
- Those of you who are supported in the enhanced resource centre make good progress because of the special support you receive.
- The school's leaders have been effective in improving many aspects of the school's provision and this is having a positive impact on your achievement.

We have asked the school to make sure teaching is more consistent and that you are given more inspiring tasks in all lessons. You can help make this happen by giving your full attention to your work.

On behalf of the team of inspectors I wish you all success in the future and hope many of you will read the full report that contains more details.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

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