



Crown Hills Community College, Leicester

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 120227
 LEA Leicester

Inspection number 280783
 Inspection dates 21-22 November 2005
 Reporting inspector Dr David Biltcliffe

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

Type of School	Community	School address	Gwendolen Road
School category	Secondary		Leicester
Age range of pupils	11-16		LE5 5FT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 273 6893
Number on roll	1,204	Fax number	0116 273 0413
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr G Rawnsley
Date of previous inspection	4-8 December 2000	Headteacher	Mr G A Coleby

Age group	Published	Reference no.
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a little larger than the typical secondary school. There are more boys than girls. The school has had a high turnover of staff, often for promotion. There is, for example, just one faculty head out of 10 who was also at the school at the last inspection.

Pupils' overall attainment on entry to Year 7 is below average. There are 37 pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. Nearly two thirds of pupils are of Indian heritage and about 5% of pupils are White British. Pupils' overall social and economic background is below average.

The school gained specialist sports college status in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors agree with the school that Crown Hills is a good, effective school. It is a friendly, calm and purposeful place. Its strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. Parents and pupils have great confidence in the education that the school provides.

The school is good, because most pupils progress well. Standards of work are broadly average. Current work in English, mathematics and science is average and improving. Most teaching is well organised and thorough, and pupils are keen to learn.

The quality of care is generally high. All pupils are equally valued and the vulnerable are carefully supported. Pupils are well behaved, pleasant and polite. The school's links with the outside world are outstanding.

There are a few weaknesses. High ability pupils are not stretched enough in a minority of lessons and some boys coast along, partly because the teaching they receive does not stimulate them sufficiently. There is not enough religious education teaching for Years 10 and 11. Apart from some very poor toilets, the school is clean, tidy and welcoming.

Senior management has achieved much during a time of considerable staff turnover. Staff morale is high. Middle managers feel trusted and respond with commitment. Pupils like coming to school. Most school tasks are undertaken effectively. The school runs smoothly.

The school has, overall, sustained the quality of its provision well since its last inspection in 2000. With the exception of daily collective worship, all the main weaknesses identified five years ago have been cleared up effectively. The school has a generally well founded view of its own effectiveness. Senior management is well capable of achieving the further improvement in performance that is possible. The school gives good value for money.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise further the achievement of boys and high-ability pupils by always matching work closely to their interests and needs and by assessing their progress more regularly.
- Ensure that all lessons have sufficient intellectual challenge through a greater emphasis on probing questions and deeper discussion.

Achievement and standards

The majority of pupils make good progress from a below average level on entry so that, by the end of Year 9, standards in English and mathematics are in line with the national average. Pupils do a little better in mathematics than in English. In the past few years, standards in science have been weaker and below average. New, invigorated leadership of the subject, however, is now improving standards and they are broadly similar to the national average.

The 2004 and 2005 GCSE results were a little below average, partly through the legacy of low results in science. The current work in Years 10 and 11 is better than recent results would indicate and is broadly in line with the national average. Girls generally progressed well to GCSE, but boys (and especially boys of Indian heritage) lag behind a little because they are not consistently challenged and stimulated in some lessons. The few white pupils progress satisfactorily.

Those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English do well and benefit from the extra help they receive. Occasionally, the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in lessons. This results in them treading water and not moving on at the rate they could. The effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities ensures that they make good progress. The good level of achievement results in most pupils meeting the appropriate targets set for them.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to work. They respect one another and their teachers. Their attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They rightly view it as a safe, caring community.

Pupils carefully respect most of their school surroundings, which are clean and attractive. In contrast, some toilets are unacceptably poor.

Pupils value the good opportunities they have to express their views – as, for example, through the School Council. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to acquire job-related skills, take part in cultural activities and extend their spiritual awareness. Their moral and social well-being is nurtured well.

The school uses its sports college status very effectively to promote a healthy lifestyle for pupils. Pupils have the benefit of an unusually wide range of sports. The lunch menus feature a good range of healthy choices, but pupils only have access to drinking water in the dining hall.

Overall, the school is a happy multicultural community. Pupils mature well here into courteous young adults.

Grade : 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. There are considerably more strengths than weaknesses in both teaching and learning.

The best teaching inspires pupils and sets them thinking. It requires them to analyse issues deeply and widely. Much is of this quality. It was seen to good effect in a Year 10 English lesson in which pupils produced persuasive arguments for and against euthanasia. Teaching is rarely inadequate, but occasionally there is not enough intellectual challenge in lessons. In these cases, topics are covered at a superficial level and probing discussion is rare.

Good working relationships between teachers and pupils encourage pupils to want to learn. Pupils enjoy their schoolwork. In most lessons, pupils know very clearly how well they are doing and how to improve further. Teachers plan lessons with thought and care. Lesson time is well used.

In many classes, pupils' attainments vary very widely. There are examples of exceptional teaching which copes fully with all pupils' needs. In those lessons where teaching is only just satisfactory, higher attainers in particular do not achieve all they should. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well taught, because teachers and teaching assistants thoroughly understand their needs. Those pupils at an early stage of learning English are well taught.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The school's curriculum is good. Job-related courses are an important component, such as a new course in information and communication technology (ICT). There is little teaching about personal finance and basic economics. The overall picture, however, is good. This is because subjects and courses are well matched to pupils' different needs and abilities.

Good use is made of links with other schools and colleges. Still more are planned. As a result, very many pupils continue with full-time study beyond the age of 16. The school's specialism of sport is well used by all subjects. The

school offers a good range of activities outside lessons. Pupils talk thoughtfully about how they gain from taking part in clubs and sports teams.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

As at the time of the last inspection, the provision for pupils' care, advice, guidance and support is good. The required procedures for health and safety and for child protection are in place. The pastoral system promotes pupils' personal development well. The valuable programme of personal, social and health education (*Life Skills*) includes effective, specialist teaching of citizenship and careers education.

The school uses information from its monitoring and analysis of pupils' achievement well to identify and address most weaknesses in learning. Vulnerable pupils benefit from the school's thoughtful use of professional services provided by specialist outside agencies. The poor condition of most toilets is the one aspect of care that needs urgent improvement and spoils an otherwise good picture.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

The school regards leadership and management as outstanding. Inspectors rate them as good. This is mainly because pupils' achievement, though good overall, has some aspects that require improvement.

The headteacher is highly respected by staff and pupils alike. He has a strong, calming presence around the school. He has been the driving force behind many significant initiatives, such as the school's status as a sports college and as a teacher training school that considerably benefits pupils. The leadership team provides good support. Middle management is strong. The long-standing problems in science have recently been remedied.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a good knowledge of most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have ensured that nearly all the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. The school still does not, however, meet statutory requirements for collective worship or religious education.

Staff set challenging targets for individual pupils and have good systems for monitoring pupils' progress. The school communicates well with parents and takes careful account of their views. The school has outstanding links with many external agencies, including teacher training institutions, universities and

other schools. The school's leadership has the capacity to improve the school still further.

Grade: 2

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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
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	Yes

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Crown Hills Community College
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23 November 2005

Dear Pupils

This is a brief letter to you all. It is, first, to thank you for the pleasant way you received us and what you had to say to us. Second, it is to tell you what we think about your school.

Overall, we think that **Crown Hills is a good school**. There are also a few things that need to improve.

These are the things that we consider are the main strengths of your school. We hope that you enjoy reading them and keep working to make your school even better:

- Most of you work hard and do well at school.
- Your teachers organise lessons thoroughly and prepare you well for the future.
- You are polite, pleasant young people who can express your views clearly.
- The school is a safe, friendly place. Teachers care about you.
- You like coming to school and are proud to be pupils here.

There are just a few things that need to be better. Please think carefully about them and play your part in improving your school:

- In a few lessons you do not have to think hard enough about your work.
- Teachers need to ask more probing questions, so that some boys and the most able amongst you achieve more.
- Staff need to ensure that a few pupils do not spoil the toilets for the rest of you.

The inspection team sends you its best wishes for the future.

David Biltcliffe

Lead Inspector