

Broughton Hall High School, A Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104713
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	377116
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2012
Lead inspector	Sally Kenyon HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,300
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joe Hartley
Headteacher	Gerard Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
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This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 38 teachers in 41 lessons and conducted four learning walks. Meetings were held with leaders at all levels, members of the governing body, staff and students. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, 496 responses from parent questionnaires, observed the school's work, scrutinised students' books and other documentation.

Information about the school

Broughton Hall is a larger than average secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportions of students who speak English as an additional language or from minority ethnic groups are both well below average. The proportion of students with special educational needs at 'school action' is just below average and that of those with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. There is a 'soft federation' through the sixth form with Cardinal Heenan Boys' school. The school moved to a partial new build in April 2011. A convent is on the same site as the school. The school has met the government floor standards for the past three years in English. Floor standards were met for the past three years in English and mathematics.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- Broughton Hall High School, a Technology College is a satisfactory school. The sixth form is also satisfactory.
- Achievement is satisfactory rather than good because teaching does not always meet the needs of all students effectively.
- Where good teaching was seen, it was characterised by well planned activities supported by a good pace, clear learning objectives and outcomes and regular and accurate assessment.
- Where teaching was satisfactory or inadequate, lessons were slow to start, there was insufficient pace to learning and data about students' abilities were not used effectively in the planning or delivery of the lesson. Thus, students of all abilities, but particularly the most-able, failed to make good progress. This was most evident at Key Stage 3.
- The use of assessment, particularly written feedback is variable. Some good examples were seen where teachers had marked work diagnostically so that students understood the level or grade they are working at and what they need to do to improve. However, this practice is inconsistent and where students do not receive such feedback they are unclear about how they can make better progress. A small minority of students who responded to the survey say they do not know how well they are doing at school.
- Behaviour and safety are good and concerted efforts to improve attendance mean that it is now above the national average. Inspectors found students to be polite, respectful and courteous.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are examples of leaders taking effective action to improve teaching; however, some inconsistencies remain, for example in the quality of written feedback.
- Systems for self-evaluation are in place, but lack rigour and therefore effective monitoring does not take place regularly enough, nor does it always include sufficient detail to support the school's judgements about its performance.
- Members of the governing body are highly committed to the school, but their expertise is not currently utilised fully to improve achievement.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 3, to ensure that all groups, especially the most-able, make at least good progress by:
 - ensuring consistent use of prior attainment data to plan learning appropriately so that all groups are sufficiently supported and challenged
 - share good practice in written and verbal feedback so that students can independently improve their work
 - ensure a prompt and stimulating start to lessons and maintain a good pace for learning throughout.

- Increase the rigour of ongoing whole-school self-evaluation by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels monitor achievement for all groups more regularly and effectively
 - involving members of the governing body more directly so that their expertise is utilised fully
 - providing specific evidence of current standards in order to provide a more accurate picture of the school's performance.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Students enter the school with broadly average attainment overall, however, over one third have high attainment on entry. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is above average. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children make good progress and, while inspectors found some groups to be making good progress, this was not the case for all, particularly the most-able. The proportion of students gaining five GCSE grades at A* to C, including English and mathematics, improved in 2011 to significantly above the national average. This is due in part to the school employing more teachers to reduce class sizes in those subjects. Achievement in science was graded as good in an Ofsted subject survey in 2009. However, attainment in that subject has declined and the school has yet to implement some of the recommendations of the survey, principally the offer of single sciences at Key Stage 4, which will form part of the 2012 curriculum in an attempt to raise achievement for the most-able.

More-able students were rarely seen making good progress because planning does not take account of their abilities to engage and challenge them sufficiently in their learning. During a number of short visits to lessons, one inspector looked at planning for the more-able and only one out of the four lessons seen had differentiated planning for the more-able. This was also seen, for example, in a Year 8 'Enquiring Minds' lesson, when students had to write a storyboard of the Beatitudes; some high-ability students were so unchallenged by the task they were set that they became disengaged by the lesson. Learning was not assessed effectively and marking in books was cursory, with no meaningful commentary on how to improve.

Overall, students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. However, inspectors observed a great variety of progress for this

group, ranging from inadequate to good. The gap between the attainment of those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the national average is closing, partly due to the reduction in persistent absence. However, opportunities are missed to monitor the achievement of this group rigorously to improve their achievement further. Students' attainment in reading is satisfactory and the school is, rightly, focusing upon improving literacy further across the curriculum, especially at Key Stage 3. Achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory and there is an improving trend, most noticeably at AS level. However, the proportion of students gaining A to B grades is not as high as it should be.

Quality of teaching

While a large majority of good teaching was observed, outstanding practice was also observed. A small minority of inadequate teaching was seen, particularly at Key Stage 3. Some good teaching was seen, for example, in Year 10 catering where students worked independently to make a cheesy potato bake. The planning for this lesson was strong and students worked at a good pace, all knowing and understanding what they were learning. The teacher circulated around the class checking learning effectively and supporting students to improve their work.

In an inadequate Year 7 Opening Minds lesson, students with special educational needs did not make satisfactory progress because they were not supported or challenged adequately in their learning and there was insufficient support for their reading and literacy skills. However, some very effective use of learning support was also seen. The school employs three learning support assistants currently as funding has been used to employ more teachers to reduce class sizes in mathematics and English in order to raise achievement.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well; however, inspectors found that teaching over time is satisfactory. Teaching in the sixth form is stronger than the other key stages, as this is where the school has recently concentrated its efforts on improving the quality of provision. However, in Key Stage 3, nearly half of the teaching observed was satisfactory or inadequate. Within the inadequate lessons, students of all abilities were seen failing to make satisfactory progress. This is as a result of weaker planning. Schemes of work for the 'Opening Minds' in Year 7 curriculum showed that not enough detail or guidance was given to staff to explain how to match work effectively to the needs of all students. Also, much of the assessment referred to at the end of the scheme of work was 'informal', raising questions about how progress could be demonstrated and monitored.

The school moved into its new premises in April 2011 and is still overcoming some difficulties, for example, with the movement around school between lessons. Some staff are having to move considerable distances during lesson changeovers, with heavy bags of books and equipment. The school has recently introduced an extra five minutes 'travel time' between lessons to help ensure a prompt start, however, some lessons are still only just starting after 10 minutes, which is a significant amount of learning time lost.

Cross-curricular provision for communication and mathematics is variable. The school has recently appointed a literacy coordinator and identified that literacy at Key Stage

3 is an area that needs to be developed. While some good practice was seen, an inconsistent approach to the promotion of literacy left some students making less progress than they should. Similarly, homework is set and marked in individual subjects, although some variability remains in the amount of homework, the regularity with which it is set and how it is assessed. Some good examples of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education were seen in lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Although the very large majority of parents and carers feel that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school, a very small minority feel that lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour. A few specific comments were received from parents and carers about bullying and behaviour and these were followed up by inspectors. Inspectors found the 'team around year' approach to pastoral care was very effective in ensuring that students feel safe and feel there are a number of adults they can turn to if they have an issue. The school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding.

Students are aware of different forms of bullying and the school has taken decisive action to reduce text-bullying by not allowing mobile phones in school. Most students who responded to the survey feel that the school deals effectively with bullying. The large majority of behaviour observed in lessons was good, due to the evident respect for staff and good manners of many students. Almost all students, parents and carers who responded to the survey feel that students are safe in school.

There were no permanent exclusions last year and the school uses its varied curriculum to keep students, particularly those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, engaged. Exclusions have fallen when compared to the same period last year. The school has some striking examples of where it has accepted students who have been permanently excluded from other schools and, through quite personalised care and support, have kept them engaged and attending right through school. Attendance has improved from the same period last year and the school can point to notable successes in the monitoring of and improvements in attendance and reduction of persistent absence.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has realised the vision for the new school building, which has taken years in planning and building. Almost all staff who responded to the survey say they are proud to be at this school and that the school provides appropriately for their professional development. Leaders at all levels, including members of the governing body, are able to articulate some of the school's key areas for improvement and give examples of how they contribute to school improvement planning.

The school has systems in place for continuous self-evaluation and school improvement planning. However, processes for self-evaluation lack rigour, monitoring is not always timely enough to highlight inconsistencies in practice, and the evaluation of the school's performance is not always fully accurate.

There is some considerable educational expertise among the governing body, however, governors are not involved fully in school self-evaluation and opportunities

are missed to use their expertise to bring about improvements. While high expectations, drive and commitment are evident among some leaders, these are not shared by all the staff and this is evident through the planning and monitoring, particularly of teaching. Statutory requirements are met for safeguarding and the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well.

There have been substantial challenges facing the school in recent years, not least driving through the building project, dealing with some significant staffing issues, and managing the 'soft federation' with the neighbouring boys' school for shared sixth-form provision. The new leadership of the upper school, including Year 11 and the sixth form, has made a concerted effort to drive up the quality of teaching and the effect can be seen most markedly in the sixth form. There have also been improvements in AS level results last year and improvements in mathematics and English at Key Stage 4. The school has also demonstrated satisfactory capacity to improve through its pastoral work and the gains made in improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. The school works well with parents and carers and the very large majority of parents feel that their concerns are responded to and that they are kept well informed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well by the school and the school's Catholic ethos permeates much of its work. Inspectors observed an assembly which was very prayerful and meaningful. The school has a 'Liverdelphia' exchange programme, continuing to forge the links made with Philadelphia, America, through the Building Schools for the Future programme. Each year, 25 students in Year 12 have the opportunity to experience what life is like in a very different culture and setting in Philadelphia. Students fund the trip themselves through a variety of fundraising activities. Students are involved in work to promote Fair Trade and religious groups such as 'Young Mercies', who work with the Sisters of Mercy and the School Chaplain on the school site to learn about their work. The school leads the local cluster for its feeder primary schools. Primary school pupils come to a Saturday morning club. Sixth-form students do a great deal of community work including raising money for and helping at a local school for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.
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.