

Cams Hill School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137538
Local Authority	Not applicable
Inspection number	386742
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Raeside 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,048
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Squire
Headteacher	Mr David Wilmot
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2007
School address	Shearwater Avenue Fareham PO16 8AH
Telephone number	01329 231641
Fax number	01329 283996
Email address	office@camshill.com

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The team observed 38 lessons and 38 teachers, three of whom were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked closely at its analysis of students' progress and attainment. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, staff and a local primary school headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised the school improvement plan, policies, reports from a local authority adviser and records of school improvement work. They considered responses to questionnaires from 554 parents and carers, 175 students and 38 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effectively the school has addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.
- How effectively the school maximises attainment and progress for all groups of students.
- The impact of strategies to improve attendance for all groups of students.
- The quality of behaviour around school and the impact of behaviour on learning.

Information about the school

Cams Hill is an average-sized comprehensive school. Most students are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. A much lower proportion of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities than in most schools and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average. The school has had specialist status in science since 2005 and is an Investor in People organisation. It converted to academy status on 1 October 2011.

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
<p>Main findings</p> <p>Cams Hill School provides an outstanding quality of education in an exceptionally safe environment. The determined and uncompromising leadership of the headteacher and senior team has sustained the strengths identified at the last inspection and secured further improvement, particularly in students’ achievement. One parent commented, ‘My son left Cams Hill with fantastic results. My daughter is now receiving the same high standard of education.’ Aspirations at Cams Hill are high. Students understand that their teachers are ambitious for them and in turn show confidence in themselves; they know their targets, can explain how to reach them and often express a determination to exceed them. High attainment is sustained across subjects and is particularly notable in science, the school’s specialism, which is a strength of the excellent curriculum.</p> <p>The excellent care, guidance and support provided for students at Cams Hill begins during the transition from primary school and is sustained through each stage of their education. Several parents and carers wanted to emphasise the excellent care their children receive. One was most impressed by the way ‘the school strives to meet individual needs’, adding, ‘we are very pleased with our son’s academic and emotional progress’. Students are proud of their school and enjoy being there, as demonstrated by their above-average attendance and welcoming, considerate behaviour towards one another and adults. They are very well attuned to matters of personal safety. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agreed that the school keeps their children safe. Students readily take on responsibilities and show a commitment to maintaining a harmonious school community.</p> <p>The extended use of school facilities through the Cams Community initiative is innovative and enhances the school’s reputation and profile. Partnerships beyond the school are actively pursued. Cams Hill knows and shares its strengths, for example as the hub of its thriving science consortium, as well as seeking a wide and memorable range of opportunities for its own students. The curriculum is a strongly focused on attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. It is also carefully reviewed and adapted to meet the full range of needs and abilities and significantly enhanced by a wide range of trips and other experiences. The clear rationale behind all curriculum decisions is to improve outcomes and employability for Cams Hill students and this is reflected in their outstanding achievement. Students’ literacy and numeracy skills are extremely well developed, as is their use of information and communication technology. This equips them very well for their next</p>	

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steps; virtually every student continues on into further education, training or employment.

A very large majority of parents and carers say they are happy with their child’s experience at school. Occasionally, however, decisions made by the school, including those affecting curriculum choice, are not well understood by parents and carers. A small minority do not think that the school takes sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns and a range of comments reflected this.

The very large majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good; some was outstanding. There is a collective determination among senior and middle leaders to secure outstanding learning for all. The impact of this is visible in the best lessons, where students thrive and make exceptional progress because teaching enables them to take responsibility for their own learning, to think deeply and to articulate what they have learned. This is not yet a consistent picture, however. Too many lessons are still teacher dominated. Students make good progress, but may be passively rather than actively engaged. The school has a wealth of assessment information but teachers’ use of this, to plan for individual learning needs and to challenge every student, is of variable quality.

The headteacher has effectively established high staff morale and a collective pursuit of excellence. Senior and middle leaders evaluate the school’s success unstintingly and plan effectively for each new phase of development, such that the capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding lessons, through teaching that consistently:
 - engages all students actively in their learning
 - provides opportunities for all students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, including taking a lead role in lessons
 - makes more precise use of assessment information to tailor activities, including targeted and searching questioning, to match individual needs more closely.
- Review and improve systems for consulting with parents and carers, so that they are given opportunities to engage with key matters and an increased proportion feel able to support their children’s learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students are extremely well motivated and enjoy their lessons. Their enthusiasm for learning is increased by excellent relationships with their teachers and with one another. From starting points that are broadly average they make consistently good

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and at times outstanding progress, so that by the end of Year 11 their attainment is high. The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics at grade C or higher, is consistently well above the national average. The proportion achieving A and A* grades is higher than average and improving strongly year on year. Progress for the small group of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is also good overall and particularly strong in science.

The consistently good and often outstanding behaviour at Cams Hill makes a significant contribution to learning. Students respond eagerly to opportunities to work collaboratively. Where teaching allows, behaviour is outstanding because students are self-directed and active in seeking solutions to problems. Behaviour around the school is orderly and calm. Students are responsive to school sanctions; fixed-term exclusions are falling because an alternative, inclusive sanction is successful. Permanent exclusion has been unknown at Cams Hill for many years.

Students have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and avoid risk. They appreciate the school’s input in this area, such as the successful campaign to encourage cycling to school and the wearing of cycle helmets. They are responsive to health-related teaching and initiatives, for example on the dangers associated with smoking or drugs. They are mature in social situations and mix well, showing respect for one another’s backgrounds, although their understanding of cultural contexts beyond their own experience is less well developed.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	1
Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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:	2
Pupils’ attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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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How effective is the provision?

Teachers' strong knowledge of their subjects and of students as individuals contributes to consistently good teaching. Planning shows an awareness of the range of learning needs in each class. In the best lessons this is used expertly to target tasks and questions so that everyone is challenged and learning moves forward at a brisk pace. A variety of methods of assessing understanding, including self- and peer-assessment, provide regular updates on progress. In English lessons, for example, students routinely apply examination criteria to models of writing and to their own work; they apply this understanding skilfully to move from one grade to the next.

Where teaching is less strong, it is often because the lesson is over-directed by the teacher. Challenge, especially for the most-able, is more limited, because there are fewer opportunities for students to take the initiative or to articulate what they have learned through group and paired discussion. Questions and tasks are directed to the whole class, rather than targeted to maximise the progress of individuals or groups.

The curriculum is carefully planned to secure the best possible outcomes for students of all abilities. It is routinely reviewed and adapted. For example, a coherent and coordinated plan for the implementation of GCSE controlled assessments has reduced pressure on students and made effective use of curriculum time. Curriculum development in science has achieved national recognition. Participation in a wide range of enrichment activities is highly successful, including: the BBC's 'School Report'; a website design competition for a prestigious company; and participation in the European Business Partnership languages challenge.

Highly effective use of a range of external agencies provides exceptional care, guidance and support. There are striking examples of the school working exceptionally well with students facing challenging personal circumstances, enabling them to continue their education and achieve excellent outcomes. The parent support adviser provides highly effective support and advice to vulnerable families. The rate of persistent absence is lower than average because systems to promote high attendance are well targeted and effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

Highly effective leadership at all levels contributes to students' excellent outcomes. Middle leaders are a cohesive and energetic group, who share the headteacher's and senior team's vision of 'quality and achievement' for all. Rigorous analysis at all levels means that any underperformance is identified rapidly. Senior leaders carefully monitor the progress and success of all groups of students; where gaps are identified concerted action is taken to close them. There is a sharp focus on improving teaching and learning, underpinned by the accurate and regular evaluation of classroom practice. Some effective collaborations are helping to spread the best practice and develop innovative approaches to learning: the use of e-readers to regenerate interest in reading among boys; and handheld technology in mathematics, to develop confidence and speed in arithmetic.

The skilled and dedicated governing body provides effective support for and challenge to the school. Governors discharge their statutory duties effectively and, along with senior leaders, adopt a robust approach to safeguarding. Staff are knowledgeable about child protection; policies and training are thoroughly implemented and regularly reviewed. Governors keep in touch with curriculum development through subject links and the 'governor a month' programme, through which governors, in turn, participate in lesson visits, school council meetings and strategic planning meetings. The science specialism has led to the development of a range of partnerships highly beneficial to the school, such as the link with a major pharmaceutical company and the opportunity to showcase science curriculum materials on a national platform. Membership of a teaching schools consortium has enabled staff to develop and improve their practice through teacher exchanges.

The school actively pursues equality of opportunity and of outcomes. There is good encouragement for students, particularly through religious studies, to understand and value diversity. Additional funding for curriculum enhancement ensures that no one is denied an experience through hardship. The promotion of community cohesion is very strong internally and locally. A range of initiatives exists to enhance students' broader understanding of diversity in a national or international context, such as links with a school in The Gambia, although this aspect is less fully developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement

1

Taking into account:

2

The leadership and management of teaching and learning

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met

2

The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers

2

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

A higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The table below shows that most are in positive agreement with almost all questions, but that a lower proportion feel satisfied that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. As a result, the inspection team has recommended that the school reviews and improves its processes for engaging with parents and carers. One parental questionnaire raised a potentially serious concern; this was fully explored and investigated with the school during the inspection. Inspectors were satisfied that no further action was required.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cams Hill 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 554 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,048 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	190	34	318	57	34	6	5	1
The school keeps my child safe	206	37	332	60	8	1	2	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	159	29	332	60	48	9	8	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	150	27	342	62	35	6	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	147	27	365	66	19	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	120	22	343	62	58	10	10	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	93	17	365	66	64	12	6	1
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)	144	26	312	56	32	6	7	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	133	24	358	65	30	5	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	147	27	311	56	46	8	7	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	94	17	313	56	51	9	14	3
The school is led and managed effectively	157	28	335	60	22	4	7	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	198	36	319	58	20	4	2	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



21 October 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Cams Hill School, Fareham PO16 8AH

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. You show great pride in your work and in your considerable achievements at Cams Hill. We agree that your school is outstanding.

Over the years your examination results have improved significantly and are now high compared to the rest of the country. Your school sets high targets for you; in lessons, we found that you are very aware of this but not intimidated by it. Often, you told us how you intended to beat your already challenging target grade.

You feel very safe at school and your parents and carers agree that it is an exceptionally safe environment. We liked the 'bright idea' from the school council that staff and prefects should wear high-visibility jackets at lunch and break times. This makes them luminously visible and immediately accessible, should anyone need their help. This is just one example of the excellent contribution you make to the school and wider community.

We visited a wide range of your lessons and found that you make good progress in a very large majority of them. You are keen to learn. Your good behaviour and willingness to work together contribute to an excellent atmosphere for learning. In some lessons, you make outstanding progress because you are expected to be actively involved and to take responsibility for your own learning. In these lessons, there is a high level of challenge for all of you because teachers target and question individuals, expecting deep thinking, and articulate discussion. We have asked your senior teachers to ensure that more of your lessons are as good as these outstanding examples. You can help by sharing responsibility for achieving this goal and by looking for ways to get actively involved in your learning wherever possible.

Yours sincerely

Christine Raeside
Her Majesty's Inspector

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