

Cams Hill School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116508
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	290555
Inspection dates	26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Sanderson (HMI)

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

Type of School	Comprehensive
School category	foundation
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1044
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Councillor D J Murray
Headteacher	Mr D K Wilmot
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002
School address	Shearwater Avenue Fareham PO16 8AH
Telephone number	01329 231641
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Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Cams Hill School is an average sized comprehensive school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the number of pupils whose first language is not English is well below the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. The school was awarded "Leading Edge" status in May 2003 and achieved specialist status in science in the summer of 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cams Hill School provides pupils with a good education. The very effective leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school is fully focussed on raising the achievement of pupils. He is well supported by the senior leadership team.

Teaching is good overall and this ensures that all pupils make good progress in their learning. Standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are well above the national average. However, there is some variation in the progress made by pupils in different subjects. The percentage of more able pupils achieving the higher A* and A grades at GCSE is also below expected. Senior and middle leaders monitor both pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Much good teaching practice is shared and support is provided to identified teachers. However, there remains some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Some lessons lack sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils. The school curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs and interests of pupils well. The school offers pupils a broad range of both academic and vocational courses. A well supported range of extra curricular trips, clubs and activities is organised by the school.

The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is well above the national average. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. The behaviour of pupils both in lessons and around the school is good. The school's provision for developing healthy lifestyles is excellent. The care guidance and support of pupils is good and ensures that they feel safe. The school works very well with a range of agencies to ensure that all pupils are well cared for. Pupils' academic guidance and support is good although there is some variation in practice and effectiveness between different subjects.

The school has good systems for self evaluation and senior managers and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, a number of parents feel they are not consulted often enough and their views and concerns are not sufficiently acted upon. The school has effectively addressed the issues raised at the last inspection. Standards have improved at the end of Year 9 and have remained high at the end of year 11. The school has a good capacity to improve. The school's specialist status in science is a particular strength. It has had a significant impact on improving links with partner primary schools and secondary schools across the region as well as universities and other organisations. It has enhanced pupils' experience of science through the use of visitors and visits. This has had a positive impact on pupil achievement and personal development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the percentage of lessons that are good or outstanding.
- Offer more challenge for higher attaining pupils so that more are able to obtain the higher A* and A grades at GCSE.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above the national average and achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment that are above the national average, although there is some variation in the ability of different year groups. Pupils make good progress during their first three years at the school obtaining well above national average standards by the end of Year 9. They make particularly good progress in mathematics and science. The progress made by pupils in English has declined in recent years and in 2006 was satisfactory. The school is aware of this issue and has taken effective steps to improve pupil performance in this subject.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11. The standards obtained at the end of Year 11 as measured by the percentage obtaining 5 or more A* - C GCSE grades or their equivalent including English and mathematics is well above the national average. The inclusive nature of the school is also demonstrated by the fact that in 2006 all pupils obtained 1 or more GCSE pass grades. However, the percentage of the higher A* and A grades achieved by more able pupils was lower than expected. There is also some variation in the progress made by pupils in different subjects. The school monitors pupil progress well and provides mentoring support for all pupils and additional help to any pupil who is underachieving. The progress made by all groups of pupils is similar.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and this has a positive impact on their achievement. Relationships among pupils are good. Most pupils get along well with each other and with their teachers. The attendance of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. However, where teaching is less effective the behaviour of a small number of pupils can deteriorate and disturb the learning of others.

Pupils have a good understanding of the elements of a safe and healthy lifestyle. The school's efforts to promote healthy lifestyles are excellent. Healthy eating is actively encouraged, participation in sporting activities is high and the developing travel to school plan is encouraging pupils to cycle and to walk.

The pupils find the school friendly and they say that there is little bullying. They are also very confident that any such issues that do arise are quickly and effectively tackled by staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A broad range of educational visits to places such as the First World War battlefields and the Neasden Hindu Temple enhance their development. Pupils contribute positively to the community through involvement in activities such as fund raising events and participation in the "Linvoy Primus Challenge". There is excellent provision for enterprise education and this is making a significant contribution to developing pupils' work place skills in preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Staff have very good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well around clear learning outcomes for pupils. In the most effective lessons, teachers take care to ensure pupils understand very clearly what is expected of them and how to achieve high standards. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is also checked with probing questioning and teachers sustain a challenging pace. These lessons also contain a range of interesting activities that engage and motivate pupils. In some lessons, however, the teaching strategies used are more mundane and do not fully capture pupils' attention. In these lessons the pace of learning is satisfactory. Most staff make effective use of pupil attainment information when planning lessons to ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate for all pupils in their class. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the whole school particularly when planning for more able pupils. Nearly all lessons are characterised by the good relations that exist between staff and pupils. This enables lessons to have a clear focus on learning.

Many teachers mark work well with helpful comments and use of national curriculum levels or GCSE grades. This ensures that pupils are clear about how to improve their work. However, this good practice is not yet consistent across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. The curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils very well. In Years 10 and 11 a broad range of academic subjects is offered. There are also opportunities for more able pupils to follow accelerated courses in mathematics and critical thinking. There is very strong provision for vocational education with a number of relevant courses that enhance progression to further education or the world of work. Specialist status in science has had a positive impact on the school curriculum. Pupils are able to follow three separate sciences at GCSE and there are many opportunities for pupils to pursue their interest in science via clubs and working with the school's science partners. The school provides an excellent range of well supported clubs, trips and activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Arrangements for promoting health and safety are thorough, with clear guidelines and procedures for risk assessments and child protection. As a result pupils feel safe and valued. The provision for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties is good, with effective levels of support both in the school and through the school's very good links with outside agencies. This support ensures that they make good

progress in their learning.

Academic support for pupils is good and is developing well because of a new assessment system that is being introduced. Target grades are set for pupils and the progress of pupils towards these targets is monitored. Underachieving pupils are identified and provided with support. However, the use of target grades is not yet consistent across the school. The pupils' report that their knowledge of target grades and associated strategies for improvement varies between subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides the school with very good leadership that is focused on raising pupil achievement. He is well supported by the senior leadership team. At all levels, leaders and managers work well together as a team to realise the school's vision.

The school has good systems of self evaluation. As a result the headteacher is clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good plans are in place to address those areas in need of improvement. The delivery and impact of these plans are closely monitored by the senior leadership team and governors. Overall, subject leaders work well to bring about improvements in teaching and pupil achievement. Not all are equally effective but senior leaders identify subject teams that need support and then work with them through an effective line management framework. Governors are effectively involved in developing the strategic direction of the school. They are aware of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement and provide the school with good support as well as challenge.

The school's financial management is secure. The senior management team and governors have been successful in attracting some additional funding to the school during the last few years. As a result there have been improvements to the school's premises since the last inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, 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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

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 interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	2
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

10 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Cams Hill School, Shearwater Avenue, Fareham, PO16 8AH

Thank you very much to all of you who spoke to us and answered our questions during the recent inspection of your school. We very much appreciate the help that you gave us. Now that we have finished the inspection I am writing to tell you of our findings.

The following points are what we found to be the school's key strengths and weaknesses.

- Your headteacher leads the school well and he is effectively supported by other senior teachers in the school.
- You are taught well and many of you are making good progress in your learning.
- The attendance of the vast majority of you is excellent.
- Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- You have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles. It was good to see many of you responding to initiatives such as the school travel plan by walking or cycling to school.
- Staff in the school take good care of you and make sure you feel safe.
- You have a good range of both academic and vocational courses to choose from in Years 10 and 11.
- The school provides you with a good range of clubs, trips and activities outside of normal schools hours. It is good to see that many of you take up these opportunities.
- Your school's award of specialist status in science has helped bring about changes that are benefiting all of you.

In order to improve further we have also asked the school to do the following.

- In many of your lessons teachers clearly explain what is expected of you, plan interesting activities, check your understanding through careful questioning and ensure no time is wasted. This helps you learn well. We have asked the school to ensure that all of your lessons are like this.
- Most of you make good progress and achieve high standards. For those of you who are capable of getting the highest grades at GCSE we have asked the school to look at ways of providing you with more challenging work in order that you can achieve your potential.

Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Sanderson
Her Majesty's Inspector