

Prince Henry's High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117000
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338931
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Smith HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	13–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Painter
Headteacher	B S Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They visited 53 lessons, and observed 51 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with staff, students and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at governors' minutes, aspects of community work, the minutes of meetings with the school improvement partner, subject evaluations and school action plans and evaluations. They also scrutinised 150 questionnaires from parents and carers, 77 staff questionnaires and 138 student questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effective support for students with special education needs and/or disabilities is to ensure they make similar progress to their peers
- how effective care, guidance and support are within the school to support minority groups
- how effective changes to the provision in the sixth form have been to improve the progress of students and to raise standards.

Information about the school

Prince Henry's High School is a larger-than-average school which serves the town of Evesham and surrounding villages. The majority of students are from a White British background with a larger-than-average proportion of students from a Gypsy Romany heritage. The proportion of students with special education needs and/or disabilities is well below average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals. In September 2002, the school became a specialist language school and in September 2007 it added mathematics and computing to its specialisms. It was designated a High Performing Specialist School in March 2010. It has received a number of prestigious awards including Healthy Schools and Investors in People.

At the time of the inspection Year 10 students were taking their end of year examinations and Years 11, 12 and 13 were busily preparing for public examinations the following week.

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

Main findings

Prince Henry's is an excellent school which continues to provide an outstanding education. The students say they enjoy school and that they are very well supported. Parents and carers are also very positive about their children's education. As one parent said, reflecting the views of others, 'Both my children have had a happy and fruitful time at Prince Henry's. I have nothing but praise for the education they have received.'

Students start school with standards which are average. They make excellent progress and standards at the end of Year 11 are high. Groups of students who are in danger of underachieving are very well supported by adaptations to the curriculum. For these students the start provided by the school, in conjunction with other local providers, means they carry on in education or training after they have left. This is very representative of the school's highly inclusive nature, so that all students achieve well and support is for all, irrespective of the level of ability. This means that students with special education needs and/or disabilities and also those from Gypsy Romany heritage do very well.

Academic progress is of a very high standard and students' personal development is often exemplary. As one parent commented, 'There is a clear dedication to education as a whole, not just exams.' Very high quality care, guidance and support provided by staff ensure students develop mature and responsible attitudes. They are extremely courteous and all their behaviour observed during the inspection was of the highest possible standard. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare; they are understandably frustrating for students but are of a relatively low level.

Students enjoy school because they are able to follow a curriculum which is very well matched to their needs. All study a modern foreign language at GCSE which reflects the school's specialist status. Teaching is very good with many outstanding lessons. Excellent relationships and very high expectations are key facets of these. Departments use formal assessment very well to identify how well students are achieving and if they are on track to meet or exceed their challenging targets. However, whilst some marking in books is very informative, it is inconsistent both within the same book and between subjects. At times, it lacks rigour and fails to inform students how to improve.

The headteacher, very well supported by the senior leadership team, sets clear and high expectations for all staff. The drive and determination to carry on improving is

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palpable. Leaders at all levels are highly effective and have ensured that the school has continued to develop. Staff have opportunities to observe work in different schools and then use this to reflect on and improve their own practice. The recent designation as a High Performing Specialist School is testimony to how well the school is doing. The specialist areas continue to raise standards and provide excellent support for other schools within the area as well as contributing to students' very good understanding of the global dimension of the community.. Governors are very active and offer very good support and challenge for the school. They are well informed and have supported the school in developing an accurate self-evaluation, although they do not always rigorously evaluate the impact of some of their policies. Improvements to the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the sixth form, which are now both judged outstanding, demonstrate the school's excellent capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of assessment so that marking consistently informs students how well they are doing and how to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are high with the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, being well above average. The school beat its targets for the proportion of students gaining three or more A* or A grades and was close to meeting its challenging targets in its specialist areas. During the inspection many classes were close to the time when students were to sit public examinations. This meant that the majority of lessons were not typical of those delivered for the rest of the year. However, observations of lessons show that learning is generally at least good and often outstanding. Students were very engaged and enthusiastic in lessons and wanted to do well. For example one class was observed trialling new computer software even though they had completed all elements of their course. Observations of how students use their knowledge and skills in examination situations show how well they have progressed since starting their courses. The very targeted support for different groups of students ensures all achieve exceptionally well.

Students feel very safe and enjoy coming to school. The mutual respect shown by all students for each other is a strong feature and also demonstrates excellent social skills. Many students take part regularly in sporting activities but, though their understanding of healthy living is high, they do not always make appropriate choices to keep themselves healthy. This was an area which responses from student questionnaires identified as less successful than others. The school supports students well with their mental health so that they are better able to cope with the pressures of examinations. Students report that the very few incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately and effectively.

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Students develop an excellent understanding of moral issues through their work in different subjects. They have high expectations of themselves and of others and demonstrate their mutual respect and trust by developing excellent inter-personal and social skills. Students are able to access a very wide variety of cultural experiences including the arts which are very strong within the school. Music is very popular both as a subject and as part of the recreational activities which are available at lunchtime. Many students take part in various ensembles, including a barber-shop group. Students are also highly reflective and take very good account of spiritual elements within school. Attendance is improving and above average. This along with very well-developed independent working and key skills ensures that students are excellently prepared for their futures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Students make excellent progress through a combination of outstanding teaching, a very well-matched and engaging curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support. There are many strengths in the teaching. Staff know their pupils well. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use a variety of different activities that engages students who are keen to learn and to achieve their potential. Pace in lessons is brisk and there is often well-focused questioning to extend students' learning. Marking in several subjects is very informative and helps students to accelerate their progress. It tells them how well they are doing and how to improve. However it is variable in its quality and depth. The very well formulated curriculum meets the needs, interests and aspirations of

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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students, at all levels of ability, very well. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities follow a very clear pathway which for some includes gaining GCSE success early and then building upon this with a variety of vocational options. This is particularly successful in ensuring students who may otherwise have failed to complete their schooling gain appropriate accreditation and the opportunity to develop good work place skills. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is very good; the school’s specialist status has enabled more staff to use suitable computer-based teaching resources. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Many students enjoy the opportunity to visit other countries and to use their language skills at first hand.

Excellent pastoral care ensures students are very well supported. Safeguarding is seen as the responsibility of all staff who take this area of their support very seriously. Students whose circumstances make them vulnerable are identified and their needs are very well met, often including very good working with a variety of external agencies. The close work with the traveller community has ensured many students of Gypsy Romany heritage achieve well at school. Students say they are very well informed and supported prior to arriving at the school and when they make choices at the end of Years 9 and 11.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly effective headteacher and senior leaders give a very strong steer and direction. Staff share this vision and ambition and are highly motivated in continuing the improvements within the school. All members of staff who submitted their questionnaire said they were proud to be a member of the school and that it was well led. This is testament to how effective the leadership has been in motivating and supporting staff. A comprehensive system to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and then put in support has improved its overall quality. Very good subject and pastoral leadership ensure the school’s priorities are transferred into actions and practice.

Governance is good. Governors are highly supportive of the school through their very well-defined and effective committees. They have ensured that safeguarding procedures are outstanding and that the school gives very good support to the local community.

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The highly inclusive nature of the school and a comprehensive analysis of examination data to identify any underachievement of individuals or groups have enabled the school to secure outstanding equality of opportunity. The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is aware that although students’ knowledge of multi-cultural Britain is good, it is not as extensive as both local and world understanding. The school gives excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Sixth form

Students enjoy their time in the sixth form and they are very well prepared for their futures. For many this means continuing their education at university. This preparation not only allows the majority to gain very high grades in their A-level examinations but also gives them excellent social skills. They take every opportunity to take responsible roles, show initiative and develop very good leadership qualities. They also value opportunities to support younger students as reading buddies, mentors or by supporting them in lessons.

The very strong leadership of the sixth form has ensured that any underperformance is addressed effectively and then closely monitored to ensure rapid improvement. The highly skilled head of sixth form leads a very effective team who share a common purpose and ensure the smooth running of the provision. This has meant that the quality of teaching and the diversity of the curriculum have continued to improve and along with excellent care, guidance and support ensures that students make outstanding progress. Through excellent partnerships, parents are thoroughly involved, informed and supported by a regular programme of meetings and reviews.

There is an evident warmth within lessons and a shared sense of purpose

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consequently relationships are excellent and this results in a confidence from the students that they will achieve their targets. As one student said, 'Our teacher makes things easy for us by giving such clear explanations.' Students readily take part in a wide range of additional activities. These include personal safety and health, driving, young enterprise, 'survival cookery', extra language courses and opportunities to work in the school or local community. Students feel well guided on to their courses and well advised and supported towards the next steps, including university applications and preparation for further training or education. Governors are often involved by helping prepare students for university interviews.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Responses from parents were extremely positive, with the overwhelming majority saying that their child enjoyed school. Whilst some areas are not as positive for all questions the very large majority of responses showed a high degree of satisfaction with the school. Parents often commented that it was not just the academic success which was important but also the personal development. As one parent said expressing similar views to others, 'My son has blossomed since coming to the school - once so shy he is now brimming with confidence for which I am extremely grateful.'

Poor behaviour in a few classes was raised as an issue by an extremely small proportion of parents. The inspection team found behaviour to be excellent, although they were aware from students that there are very rare incidents of weaker behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Prince Henry's High 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 150 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1260 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	43	80	53	2	1	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	67	45	82	55	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	38	83	55	10	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	42	77	51	7	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	66	44	79	53	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	31	87	58	14	9	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	23	97	65	14	9	1	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)	67	45	72	48	6	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	37	82	55	6	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	27	90	60	8	5	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	27	86	57	8	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	78	52	68	45	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	79	53	67	45	2	1	2	1

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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.

14 May 2010

Dear Students



Inspection of Prince Henry's High School, Worcestershire, WR11 4QH

When I visited your school recently with my colleagues, we met some of you at lunchtime and talked to others during lessons and at break. We were impressed with your excellent behaviour and manners and with the outstanding contribution you make to the life of the school and local community. You told us that you really enjoy school and this is one reason, of many, that we judge your school to be outstanding.

You make excellent progress. Results in your GCSE and A level examinations are very high. We observed a high proportion of your teachers and we judged that teaching is outstanding. We saw some very good assessment, including excellent questioning and teachers' feedback and marking of formal assessments. However, some of the marking in your books was not consistent with the best practice and did not always inform you how to get better. This is an area we have asked your school to improve and you can help by making sure you heed their advice, especially when you are told to complete work. There are excellent relationships with staff and lessons are challenging and interesting with a rich variety of activities. We were impressed by the very good curriculum which allows you all to make very good progress irrespective of the level at which you are working; for some this is because of the very good additional support.

Staff care for you excellently, and make sure you are able to go forward to the next stage of your education as well as helping you to settle at the start of Year 9. You have a very good understanding of your local area. We were particularly impressed by how many of you took part in the extra-curricular sports that are available although you were not as good at ensuring you chose the healthy options with your food. Your headteacher and other senior leaders have a very clear understanding of what needs to be done and they are very determined to carry on the excellent work within the school. They are supported by some excellent subject and pastoral leaders and teachers. Your governors are good and provide some valuable support when some of you are going for interviews at university.

We wish you well at this excellent school of which you are justifiably proud

Yours sincerely

Michael Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector

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