



Frankley Community High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103529
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 286689
Inspection dates 27 June 2006 to 27 June 2006
Reporting inspector Brian Cartwright HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	New Street
School category	Community		Frankley
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Birmingham, West Midlands B45 0EU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4649901
Number on roll	417	Fax number	0121 4648706
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2001	Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Wilding

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 27 June 2006 - 27 June 2006	Inspection number 286689
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Frankley High School is set in a predominantly suburban housing area of South West Birmingham. Social deprivation factors in the locality are high, and relatively few children come from families with higher education qualifications. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Nearly half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. There is a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD). The attainment of pupils when they join the school is well below the national average. There is a greater than average number of children who join the school after Year 7 and about the same proportion who move on before completing Year 11.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In a nutshell, Frankley High School achieves what it promises for its community and is displayed on the wall as you approach the school... success for all our pupils. This it does effectively despite considerable historical and current challenges. It is now a good school, most tellingly illustrated by the fact that all Year 11 pupils continued onto further education, training, or employment. The school has secured remarkable improvements in recent years.

The single most important reason for this success is the excellent and diverse curriculum through which every pupil can experience genuine success. This includes an impressive range of qualifications tailored to the needs of pupils, and as a result they make good progress, most noticeably in Years 10 and 11. The overall results in examinations in 2005 were broadly in line with national averages although this masked lower results in English. Further improvements to achievement in English to match those in mathematics and science, particularly at Key Stage 3 can now be addressed because staff vacancies in English have been permanently filled.

The school is fully at the centre of its community. It provides care services, youth services, sporting facilities, community learning and an outstanding city learning centre (CLC). In addition, the school is at the heart of excellent local education partnerships that play a key role in widening opportunities for pupils and crucially, professional development programmes for staff. These partnerships ensure that despite its small size, the school is at the leading edge of educational development and training. For example, the CLC provides exceptionally high quality technological support for design and technology. All pupils make high quality products, the take-up of the subject at GCSE and BTEC has increased and standards have risen quickly. The enthusiasm of the centre staff is well matched to the commitment of the school to ensure success for every pupil.

Regardless of ability, gender or background the pupils achieve success well above that of their peers in similar schools. This success is equally evident for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has reviewed its systems to address challenging behaviour and provision in the learning support unit is now good. Key to this success is that teaching and learning are a priority, with unsatisfactory behaviour tackled by referring pupils to a full-time learning mentor. One clear impact has been a steady decrease in the number of pupils requiring additional help as these pupils develop greater independent learning skills.

Standards have risen sharply since the previous inspection and almost all of the previous issues have been resolved successfully. Good financial control and local authority support has resolved the previous large budget deficit. Despite being generously resourced, the school provides good value for money because, in challenging circumstances, it secures success for all its pupils. In discussion with inspectors, pupils say they most enjoy active participation in lessons through group work, practical tasks, independent research and creative writing. Older pupils 'looked forward' to their vocational subjects, which they experience at least once a day. Pupils are keen to

support the school and suggest things that could be even better. Top of their list was better variety and value for the meals available. They hoped for a return to easy access to drinking water and a more flexible approach to 'comfort breaks'. They thought most teachers were consistent in applying disciplinary rules but felt that 'whole-class' detentions were unfair.

Although attendance is still just below average, the school's actions, particularly through its work with families and where necessary through legal action, have led to enormous improvements in recent years. Levels of attendance are now at 91%, up from a low of 73% several years ago.

Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. In most of the lessons observed it was good, particularly when the pupils had opportunities to work independently on challenging tasks. There were a few instances, however, of distracting behaviour, such as chatting when the teacher was asking for silence. Occasionally boisterous behaviour around the site during break and lunchtime spills over and unsettles the start to lessons.

The teacher-led school council provides a way for pupils to voice their views to staff, but its impact has been limited because it has not engaged with enough of the pupils. The attention paid by the school to the safety and welfare of pupils is good. The school still does not provide a daily act of collective worship; this was a point for improvement in 2001.

The school encourages pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles and continues to seek further improvements in this. For example, it has identified specific groups of pupils who do not take part in the wide range of sports activities on offer and it is working to redress this. Improvements are being made to school meals but not fast enough for some pupils.

Teaching is good. Senior staff give teachers help when they need it to improve their lessons. Heads of department also contribute but could be involved still more in this aspect of staff development. Governors are kept well informed of the school's progress and respond quickly where necessary.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall standards are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 4. This represents good progress for all pupils and is the result of a curriculum that is very well adapted to their needs. Pupils' skills in English remain weaker than other subjects and last year the proportion entered for English GCSE was low. For the current Year 11 the situation is significantly improved with much higher entry rates. But across the school standards of literacy remain low. The school must retain its focus on further improving pupils' skills, by grasping every opportunity to encourage good reading, writing and speaking in every lesson.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Marked improvements in attendance since the previous inspection show that pupils value school much more now. Behaviour is satisfactory, and good in well taught lessons.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good, because staff know how to match tasks well to the learning needs of pupils. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is carefully checked and they are well supported.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has a wide range of options for Year 10 and 11 pupils. All pupils can choose from several vocational courses alongside the traditional GCSE core subjects and qualifications to match their needs and aspirations. Every pupil does at least one vocational subject and for a few pupils, there are additional arrangements and placements outside school. Imaginative use of basic skill certificates ensures all pupils succeed at some level.

The school and outside agencies together provide many out-of-hours activities. Led by the physical education department, the school is seeking to raise its contribution still further by increasing the number of sports clubs to engage more of the older pupils. Various 'special' days or weeks give pupils access to trips and visits, and a full week of 'business enterprise' projects further secures their understanding of commercial practices.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well supported so that they achieve success on courses well matched to their abilities and future needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have driven improvement. The school seeks parents' views through surveys at parents' evenings, attendance at which has risen sharply to around 70%. Most parents are very positive about the school. There has been a welcome and recent rise in the numbers of parent governors.

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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	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your time and enthusiastic contributions to our discussions with you during our inspection. Your views have helped us confirm that your school really is good. Almost all of you are making really good progress towards lots of interesting qualifications, and the school is excellent at giving you lessons to meet your interests and needs. All the school's staff are working hard on your behalf to make sure you achieve as well as you can, and so you can be proud of attending a school that will ensure your future success.

We agree with you that a few things could be even better, for example more choice of healthy food. The school wants to provide more sporting clubs. Your school council does help the headteacher when it comes to interviewing new staff, and decisions about food, uniform and school rules, but it could be better at telling the rest of you about what it does on your behalf.

Each of you can play two key parts in making your school still better. First, English really is important to you all. You should take every opportunity in every subject you do, to practise reading, writing, and discussing your work, both in lessons and at home. Second, we think you could be a bit more considerate to each other, and your teachers, as you come into lessons, and get ready to work without teachers sometimes having to repeatedly remind you to 'settle down'.