



# Cradley High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103862  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 277015  
**Inspection dates** 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Smith HMIHMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Homer Hill
<b>School category</b>	Community		Halesowen
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		West Midlands B63 2UP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 816465
<b>Number on roll</b>	712	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 816465
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Steve Freer
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Toni Fowler

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	9 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	277015

---

© Crown copyright 2005

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in a mainly residential area of Halesowen. There is a mix of local authority and privately owned homes. The area has above average levels of social deprivation and, when pupils enter the school, standards are low. The school population reflects the cultural diversity of the area with a large proportion of pupils from minority ethnic communities as well as asylum seekers and refugees. Almost half the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. Governors have faced continuing difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

Cradley High School judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory. Inspectors agree because it is an improving school that is coping effectively with recent staffing changes and is providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The school's main education principle 'the expectation that all pupils can and should succeed' is central to its drive to raise standards and is evident in many aspects of its work. Many pupils enter the school with low standards and often with poor literacy skills. Changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum have helped pupils in the school gain better results, with five or more higher grade GCSEs now in line with the national average. Standards in Key Stage 3 and mathematics are improving but still low.

The school supports and cares for the pupils well and most pupils say they enjoy their time in school. However, although the school has worked hard to improve attendance rates they remain poor. Behaviour is generally satisfactory around the school and pupils enjoy a variety of sporting and revision clubs.

Recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning are starting to impact upon standards but these are not effectively monitored to ensure consistency across all parts of the school. The school has identified appropriate priorities for further development and it has the capacity to build effectively upon the satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

**Grade: 3**

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to raise standards at Key Stage 3 and in mathematics by extending and consolidating the recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Continue to improve attendance by targeted support and challenge to groups of pupils with poor rates of attendance.
- Make sure recent developments impact upon standards by monitoring their implementation and ensuring consistency with good practice across the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

Although standards are low at Key Stage 3 results at GCSE are now broadly in line with national averages. The school's 2005 Key Stage 3 results show a slight improvement in English but they are still below average in English, mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils who attain five or more higher GCSE grades is

now around the national average. Results in GCSE mathematics are poor but they are improving as shown by the recent modular results of the present Year 11 pupils.

Test results are analysed carefully to identify where pupils are underachieving. Extra literacy lessons have been introduced to improve the pupils' language skills and help them in other subjects. The school sets challenging targets for improvement which it mainly meets and these inform appropriate individual targets for pupils which are shared with them.

Pupils generally have low standards when they start at the school. Progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 is slightly better than average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and mainly make good progress. Over a third of these pupils gained five or more higher GCSE grades in 2005. A specific group of pupils with behaviour difficulties were supported with both their work and behaviour and they achieved good results at GCSE.

Grade: 3

**Grade: 3**

### **Personal development and well-being**

Most pupils enjoy school and they benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory.

Citizenship, personal and social education, and religious education are now taught in the form period but this does not make a strong enough contribution to the personal development of all pupils. Personal development is enhanced through other lessons such as English and science. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through their roles as prefects, form captains, and membership of the pupil support group which enables pupils' views to be considered. For example, the format of afternoon lessons has been changed following such consultation.

Despite substantial efforts to improve attendance it is poor. Rates have improved slightly but it is clear from the work in some pupils' books that frequent absence has a detrimental effect on their achievement.

Behaviour is satisfactory. In interesting lessons pupils are willing to work hard and this promotes good achievement. However, on other occasions the pupils' behaviour is sometimes immature when teachers' expectations are too low. Pupils are confident that both bullying and racism issues are addressed promptly and they value the pupil support group. Pupils' preparation for future economic well-being is satisfactory because pupils benefit from an improving programme of basic skills and work experience.

Grade: 3

**Grade: 3**

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory because they meet the needs of most pupils and enable them to make at least satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning is effectively evaluated by the school and teachers are working hard to improve their teaching. Lessons are generally well planned. The school has now started to introduce national initiatives and this has begun to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning

In the best lessons teachers plan for the different needs of individuals and groups within the class. There are good examples of pupils of all abilities being challenged by the work set. Some pupils are helped towards working independently by being given opportunities to work with a partner or in a group. Where teaching and planning are less than satisfactory this is generally because the poor behaviour of a small number of boys is not well managed and the teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are too low.

Most pupils know the levels at which they are working and teachers share with them what they need to do to improve through marking and the useful profile days. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive additional support in lessons and are generally taught well. They also receive effective language teaching when at an early stage of learning English. This enables them to make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by the staff of the school's 'HQ base' who work closely with subject teachers to enable pupils to make good progress in their studies. Additional support is available before and after school and throughout the day and pupils make good use of it.

Grade: 3

**Grade: 3**

### **Curriculum and other activities**

The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements and supports pupils' learning needs astutely. The curriculum is thoughtfully matched to the needs of most pupils, with strengths in provision for those acquiring English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs. The school's well judged change to the Key Stage 4 curriculum has introduced relevant vocational courses for older pupils. Pupils benefit from special days which focus intensively on subjects or a single theme such as the environment. Personal, social and health education are not covered consistently by all teachers because recent alterations have not been planned thoroughly, nor their effects monitored. Against a background of rapid staff turnover, the school recognises that it applies systems to check coverage

inconsistently.

The additional lessons for literacy consolidate pupils' writing well. New vocational courses for older pupils build self-confidence and basic skills, leading to improved performance in other parts of the curriculum. This prepares pupils well for future life, as does a work experience programme in Year 10. There is good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 9 to 11. At present, systems for tracking the delivery of cross-curricular themes such as ICT are weak and lack development.

Pupils learn the principles of healthy eating although they do not always act on them. They participate enthusiastically in physical education as a foundation for healthy lifestyles. There is a very wide range of extracurricular and enrichment activities available and these are well attended. Pupils participate in a wide variety of team games, athletics, dance, and many different performing arts activities.

Grade: 3

**Grade: 3**

### **Care, guidance and support**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good because of the effectiveness of a wide range of provision which the school puts in place to meet individual needs. Pupils receive good guidance on the progress they are making in subjects and what they need to do to improve. Parents and pupils value the regular opportunities they have through profile days to meet tutors and discuss progress. The support and guidance which pupils receive from tutors to promote their personal development is only satisfactory because the quality of the experience of form time is variable across groups.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They are well supervised, and any incidents are dealt with thoroughly. Parents and pupils are informed well of their options in Year 9. Pupils in Year 11 feel well supported by the Connexions service in considering choices on leaving school. There are effective induction procedures to help new pupils settle into the school.

A considerable strength of the school's care systems is the range of additional support which is put in place to support and safeguard vulnerable groups of children, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's Coverpoint base gives very good support to children with a range of needs, many of whom would not be attending school without its support. Effective child protection and health and safety procedures are in place.

Grade: 2

**Grade: 2**

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and her deputy provide a clear lead to colleagues. They support staff with their commitment and drive and take on subject leadership roles when necessary. They work well together to promote a sense of teamwork.

The school has had severe staff recruitment and retention problems. As a result many subject leaders have only been in post for a short time and recent developments have not become sufficiently embedded to be able to see the full impact upon raising standards. Senior managers have clear expectations of subject leaders, who benefit from well measured guidance and support. Good frameworks to help them check and improve their planning are in place, although these are not yet implemented consistently. Monitoring by middle managers has not been systematic to ensure consistency of practice across the school and evaluation often lacks rigour. The school has evaluated its work, including the views of pupils and parents, and the results have been used to produce a relevant development plan to continue to raise standards and improve the provision for pupils. The school works well with a local provider to run a graduate teacher programme and this is very effective in helping recruit suitably qualified teachers.

Governance and financial management are satisfactory. The governors support the school leadership team and also ask questions to hold the school to account for the standards achieved by the pupils. They work with the senior managers to achieve satisfactory value for money.

Grade: 3

**Grade: 3**



**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Cradley High School Homer Hill Halesowen West Midlands B63 2UP

11 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your keen responses and good behaviour when we talked with you during our visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and your teachers. Your comments helped us to get a clear understanding of school life and what you enjoy and value in school and also what causes you problems.

We were impressed by the behaviour most of you showed around school and your willingness to talk to us about what you thought was good. Lessons were often interesting and helped you towards relevant qualifications. However, in some lessons some of you were not interested and this led to some silly behaviour. You also enjoy a wide range of high quality clubs and activities, with many of you taking part.

The school helps many of you with support with your English and the Coverpoint base gives good support for those of you who need it. Many of you said you enjoyed school but attendance for some of you is poor and this does not allow you to make the progress you should. Your headteacher and deputy make sure that they support all staff in making your time in school as productive as possible.

There is room for some improvements.

Standards in mathematics and Key Stage 3 need to be higher.

Attendance for some groups needs to be better.

The school needs to check that the work you cover is consistent between groups and teachers.

We hope you will be successful at this caring school and enjoy your time there.

Yours sincerely

Michael Smith HMI