

# Raynes Park High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102674
<b>Local Authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	355235
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robin Hammerton HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Leo Hanmer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Newman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Bushey Road Raynes Park London SW20 0JL
<b>Telephone number</b>	02089464112
<b>Fax number</b>	02089470224
<b>Email address</b>	school@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They observed 43 lessons taught by 41 teachers. They observed the school's work, talking to many members of staff and students, as well as representatives of the governing body and the local authority. They scrutinised documents including assessment data and the school's strategic plan. Inspectors considered carefully the 286 questionnaires received from parents and carers, alongside those from staff and students.

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

- The achievement of girls.
- The causes of the decline in GCSE standards in English in 2010.
- The rapid progress made by students with statements of special educational needs, compared with that of other groups of students.
- The ways in which the school's senior and middle leaders promote improvement.
- The curriculum in the new sixth form.

## Information about the school

Raynes Park High School is a slightly larger-than-average-sized secondary school, with specialist technology status. It opened a sixth form in September 2010. It serves a diverse area with many different ethnic groups amongst its students, by far the largest of which is White British. There are fewer girls than boys on roll, though the gap has become smaller in recent years. About twice the national average proportion of students speak English as an additional language. An average number of students are assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is well above average because of the school's provision for autistic students in its access centre. A higher-than-average number of students join or leave the school other than at the usual times.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

As at its last inspection, Raynes Park High School provides a satisfactory education. Students are cared for well. They, and their parents and carers, like the school. A Year 11 student commented: 'It's good to learn. Everyone wants to work hard.' One parent summed up the views of others, commenting: 'Our son feels comfortable and happy at this school.' Another said: 'My daughter has enjoyed being here and has progressed well.'

There have been some improvements over recent years. Most examination results are average and have improved at the same rate as the national average. In 2010, however, results in English fell dramatically to well below average and were much lower than other subjects, including mathematics and science. This coincided with serious disruption in staffing within the English department, which is now resolved.

Students have positive relationships with staff and are ready to learn in lessons, contributing to them confidently. Behaviour is satisfactory, with students from different heritages working together in a friendly and calm way. Bullying is rare.

Teaching is satisfactory. There have been some improvements since the last inspection. Most lessons are carefully structured and suitably paced. In weaker lessons, teachers tend to lecture the class and pupils become less engaged. In Key Stage 4, students are generally aware of their target grades and can explain what they need to do to reach them. However, this is not always followed up in lessons. Too often, teachers make insufficient use of the accurate assessments of students' attainment to match work and activities to their actual needs. The quality of marking and individual feedback to students is also inconsistent and, while there is some good practice, does not sufficiently help students to know what they must learn next to reach their targets. These shortcomings reduce students' progress.

The school evaluates itself accurately. It is rightly concerned that some groups of students, particularly White British girls and some students with low attainment from their primary education, make less progress than these groups do nationally. Its well-intentioned actions to improve this situation, however, do not always have a high profile amongst staff. Actions lead to some improvement, but this could be more rapid. Similarly, the work to improve teaching leads to incremental rather than swift change. The school improvement plan is suitably constructed, with understandable targets and objectives. Some of its sound objectives and actions are not carried through or followed up robustly enough in practice, so that there remain inconsistencies in the quality of work between teachers and across departments.

The headteacher and senior staff are well respected by their colleagues. They took resolute action to deal with the recent serious difficulties in the English department, which is now on a much firmer footing. The school's relationship with parents and carers is being

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developed well. School leaders have developed a good curriculum, with a wide and relevant range of qualifications offered. The sixth form has made a promising start and is well led with a clear future direction. The school is improving and demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Quicken the progress of all students in lessons by:
  - making much better use of the school's assessment data to match work and activities to the actual needs of each student
  - improving the quality and consistency of marking and feedback to students, so that it systematically helps them to improve their work and reach their individual targets.
- Ensure that the strategic improvement plan has a higher profile and makes greater impact so that:
  - by autumn 2012, the quality of teaching and learning is at least good
  - attainment rises more quickly
  - gaps in the achievement of different groups are reduced further or removed.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Students' attainment when they enter the school is generally a little below the national average. At GCSE in 2010, as in previous years, the proportion of students gaining five or more passes at grades A\* to C was average. However, the proportion of students attaining five or more A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was well below average in 2010, following a poor set of results in English. Results in mathematics, however, improved. Almost all students gained at least one qualification.

Evidence from lessons observed and students' work show that students' rates of learning in English have recovered and are on a par with those in other subjects. In English lessons, as in other subjects, students were engaged appropriately in learning tasks and responded with interest, especially when the teaching was motivating and caught their imagination.

Students who speak English as an additional language join in lessons fully and attain well. Boys made faster progress than girls in the 2010 GCSE cohort. The school has identified that some White British girls make slow progress; there is some evidence of improvement for this group, particularly within the current Year 10. In lessons observed, girls took part as much as boys. Girls who spoke to inspectors said they like school and do not feel they are underachieving.

Students with autism, supported by the access centre, make very good progress as a result of the well-targeted expert support they receive and their full integration in the school. However, the progress of other students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is mixed and no better than that of all students. This is due, in part, to the lack of differentiation of work to suit particular needs in many lessons.

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Attendance is average and improving. Students understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and even the more reluctant students participate gainfully in worthwhile physical education.

Most parents who returned questionnaires consider that the school deals appropriately with unacceptable behaviour, although a few parents, carers and students raised concerns about some behaviour around the school and disruption to some lessons. Inspectors observed only isolated examples of this. Students can be boisterous in corridors and outdoor areas, especially if not immediately supervised, but feel very safe and they say that any concerns are swiftly dealt with by staff.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

While the quality of teaching has improved gradually, it has not yet changed radically students' learning and progress from the last inspection. Strengths include teachers' good subject knowledge, their positive relationships with students, the effective pace of lessons and the inventive use of a wide range of different learning activities. These positive features ensure that all students, including those who speak English as an additional language, join in and make satisfactory progress overall. In the better lessons, teachers encourage independent learning and use focused questioning to extend students' learning. In a Year 12 English lesson, the teacher carefully used phrases such as 'tell me more.' In a good Year 7 art lesson, the teacher was careful not to restrict questions to students with

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their hands up, ensuring all students understood the task and could evaluate their practical learning.

In too many lessons, the teaching is not sufficiently aimed at the actual assessed needs of those present. Tasks set are therefore too difficult for some and too easy for others. Teachers often dominate the lessons; they talk knowledgeably and kindly but without expecting the students to contribute or think sufficiently for themselves. Staff do not always offer enough useful feedback to students on how well they are learning and sometimes students' work is left unmarked. There are, however, some examples of good marking which help students to improve their work, but this is not sufficiently widespread.

The school has an inclusive curriculum policy which is put into practice well. A good range of courses is available, meeting students' diverse needs. As one student said, 'There's something for everyone.' Good efforts to make modern foreign languages attractive have led to fairly high take-up at GCSE. Technological subjects are popular, befitting the specialism. Visits out bring some learning to life. Intervention activities outside normal lessons have a useful impact on the progress of some students. Over half of the students participate in out-of-school-hours activities, with all groups well represented.

The school cares for its students effectively through well-organised procedures. Very effective induction processes welcome students joining in Year 7 and at other times. Guidance for students needing support is readily available and highly regarded. Suitable links are made with external agencies and good partnerships operate, as appropriate, with parents and carers. The school has made genuine efforts to support underachieving White British girls, through, for example, a programme of assertive mentoring. This has been helpfully refined in the light of experience. The new behaviour policy is well known to students but too new to show significant impact.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and senior staff have created a trusting atmosphere in which people feel valued and motivated. Good work to improve links with parents and carers is well underway, enabling them to contribute and engage more. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. However, just as the precise assessments made of students' attainment are not well enough used in lessons to improve learning significantly, similarly the whole-school evaluations lead only to gradual improvement in the weaker areas of the school's work. These areas for development are appropriately identified in the school improvement plan. However, this does not have a high profile, which limits its impact. While members of staff know many of the school's key objectives, they cannot always see

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precisely how their own work and accountability, or that of each department, should contribute.

Senior staff know the quality of teaching and learning across the school, having established and refined very effective observation systems. This has successfully removed some inadequacies, and guided positive developments in teachers' practice, but without raising the overall quality of teaching beyond satisfactory at this stage. School leaders and managers recognise the varied outcomes for different groups of students and seek to meet their needs equally. The strategies used have positive effects, but are not always ambitious or clear enough to address any gaps in achievement quickly.

Procedures to keep students safe are well established, audited and reviewed. They are well understood by staff and discussed helpfully by the school council. The school is a cohesive, outward-looking community. It supports a school in Nairobi. Staff organised a useful sixth form seminar about understanding violent extremism. However, managers have not sufficiently evaluated the impact of this work.

The governing body is well organised and committed. It supports the school well, contributing aptly, for instance, to the development of the sixth form and its new building. Governors ask pertinent and rigorous questions of senior leaders. With the headteacher, the governing body correctly assessed the school's overall effectiveness as satisfactory but had hoped for this to be good by now and are aware of what needs to be done to take the school forward.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

Analysis of the questionnaires returned by a small proportion of parents and carers indicates their satisfaction with the school. Some said that the school had not initially been

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their first choice but they were pleased with it. Several pointed out the good care provided, which inspectors also saw, and the ready approachability of staff. A few parents and carers noted inconsistency in the quality of teaching, which inspectors also found. Most parents and carers felt the school meets their child's particular needs; inspectors, however, judge that the school should do better in this aspect. Some parents and carers raised concerns about behaviour, which inspectors looked into carefully and found to be satisfactory. The considerable majority of parents and carers who answered questionnaires felt that the school deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour, which concurs with the inspection evidence.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Raynes Park 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 286 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1230 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



9 February 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Raynes Park High School, London SW20 0JL**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. Thank you too to those of you who completed questionnaires for us. We enjoyed meeting so many of you and hearing about all of your exploits. We were impressed, for example, with your work on behalf of charities.

We agreed with the headteacher and governors that the school provides you with a satisfactory education. Results at GCSE are about average. You told us you enjoy many lessons and we could see why. Teachers explain what they want you to learn and often choose interesting activities for you. You have a good choice of subjects in Key Stage 4, so you can choose what is most relevant to you. Many of you opt to take modern foreign languages, which will help you in the closely connected world we all live in. It is good to see the sixth form off to a very promising start. Those of you in Year 12 probably feel like pioneers; we wish you every success.

It was good to see you all getting on well together. You told us the school cares for you well. We could see this too. Help is available for anyone who needs it. Those of you who use the access centre are doing really well. Well done!

We made the following recommendations to help the school become better still.

- We are asking teachers to make better use of all the assessments made about you so that the work and teaching they give you is closely matched to your actual needs. We also are asking for all the marking across the school to be as good as the best marking already is. This will help you know how to improve your work.
- We are suggesting that the senior leaders raise the profile of the school's improvement planning to help lift standards, improve teaching further and support all groups of students in doing well.

We wish you and the school well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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