

King Richard School

Allaway Avenue, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 4QP

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Students make rapid progress from very low starting points. Their GCSE results have improved every year since the last inspection. Most exam results are at least in line with the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good in most subjects, especially English, mathematics, science and the arts. An increasing proportion is outstanding.
- Students behave well both around the school and in lessons.
- Attendance overall has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders, including the governing body, have worked successfully to improve teaching and students' achievement.
- The academic and personal subjects and courses offered to students meet their needs well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information to check students' progress is not used precisely enough by some teachers to enable all students, especially the more able, to make the progress of which they are capable.
- In some lessons, not all teachers have high enough expectations of the students to work hard. This means that some students do not make as much progress as they could to achieve the higher grades in their GCSEs.
- Actions taken to promote better attendance and reduce exclusions for those students who require extra help are not fully effective.

Information about this inspection

- Forty lessons were observed by inspectors, many of them alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised the quality of marking.
- Meetings took place with students, staff, governors and two local authority representatives.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies and safeguarding arrangements.
- By the end of the inspection visit, six responses to Parent View were collected and analysed. The school’s analysis of its parental surveys was also taken into account.
- Inspectors analysed forty questionnaires that were returned by staff.

Inspection team

John Seal, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Lesley Cox	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Helen Neal	Additional Inspector
Jason Wye	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school has specialist status for the arts.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action, or at school action plus or with a statement of special education needs, are above average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals, for whom the school receives additional government funding known as the pupil premium, is over 30%, much higher than that seen nationally.
- Nearly all the students are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in all subjects so that it is never less than good or better by:
 - ensuring all teachers have the highest expectations of all students and that they clearly communicate what those expectations are
 - ensuring teachers use their knowledge and the information about where students are in their learning to plan challenging lessons and activities consistently and precisely, especially for the more able
 - supporting students in developing their confidence and ability to learn on their own or with others, becoming less reliant on adults
 - providing feedback to students throughout lessons about how much progress they have made and what the next steps are for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of students is good

- A very large number of students start in Year 7 with levels of attainment which are much lower than those usually seen in most secondary schools. Throughout their time in the school, students' academic progress accelerates. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of students who achieve five GCSEs that are grade 'C' or above is higher than the national average. Most other GCSE measures are also in line with, or above, the national average. However, the proportion of students achieving five GCSEs graded A* to C including English and mathematics is lower than average despite their better than average progress.
- The proportions of students achieving GCSE's in mathematics is higher than the average because their progress is significantly faster than that seen nationally.
- The good improvement of students' reading and writing skills is not just left to the English department. These skills are taught well in most other subjects, particularly practising writing for longer periods of time. This was seen to particularly good effect in science and history lessons.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported and cared for in tutorials and lessons. In work seen and the school's analysis of students' achievement, their academic progress has increased quickly.
- Pupils given additional support through the government's pupil premium funding make good progress and achieve in line with their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- The best teaching is usually seen in English, mathematics, science and the specialist subjects of dance and drama. Inspectors saw many examples of teachers using their time in lessons well, skilfully questioning students and encouraging them to be more self-reliant.
- Teachers gain most students' attention quickly and plan work that interests them so that they make good progress. For example, in a drama lesson, students were observed performing scenes related to the London bombings with maturity and sensitivity.
- Most lessons are planned well to make sure the work is set at the right level for each student. Targets are set to support students and help them understand what they need to do to improve. These are seen on the walls of each classroom. 'Progress charts' illustrate to students and teachers the pathways to GCSE grades from Year 8 onwards and whether or not students are on track to gain the grade they are capable of achieving. Nearly all the students that inspectors spoke to were able to talk about what they needed to do to improve.
- The additional government pupil premium funding has been used well. Smaller class sizes, especially in English and mathematics, mean that teachers spend more time with individual students to help them overcome any difficulties when tackling challenging tasks. On occasions, however, this can lead to students becoming too dependent on adults providing answers.
- Those students with disabilities and/or special educational needs receive good support and attention from teachers. Because of the small class sizes, they work together well, minimising the need to withdraw them for additional help.
- Not all students, however, are making the progress of which they are capable, particularly the more able. This is because teachers do not always set higher targets or provide students with work that challenges them.
- The quality of teaching is more variable in the subjects of history, geography and foreign languages. In some of these lessons, teachers often talk for too long and marking does not match the high quality comments and help seen in other subjects. When this happens,

students' progress is slower because they are not clear about how to improve or do not have enough time to complete their work.

The behaviour and safety of students are good

- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because the proportion of exclusions in the previous year was higher than average and there are still a small number of students whose absence is a concern. The school's vigilant monitoring of exclusions has ensured that compared with 2011 to 2012, the numbers have reduced considerably.
- Students' attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now average. The attendance team make sure that every student's attendance and punctuality is frequently checked and followed up if a pattern of persist absence occurs. The school has a very productive partnership with agencies outside the school in order to work closely with families whose children are not at school regularly.
- Students' behaviour is consistently and typically good in lessons and when moving around the school site. They have very positive attitudes towards learning and respond well to the effective behaviour management demonstrated by most teachers.
- The policies and procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour are used well by nearly all staff. Students told inspectors about some low-level disruption in classes but said that teachers usually dealt with this well and their learning was not interrupted.
- Bullying is very rare. The school tackles the few incidents well. Students told inspectors that they feel safe and are very clear about what different forms of bullying looks like and how to deal with them.
- The small number of parents who completed Parent View were all positive about behaviour. The school's own larger survey of the views of parents supports the findings of the inspection.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and headteacher form a very strong team. Their unstinting commitment and dedication to the students' education and welfare is clearly seen in their high aspirations for all students. For example, they have used the pupil premium to good effect by maintaining very small class sizes across the school. The vision behind this approach is to make sure that all students, whatever their needs, are able to learn alongside their peers and receive work and support that is at the right level for them.
- Senior and middle leaders have a very accurate view of what the school's strengths and weaknesses are. Improvement planning identifies the right actions needed to improve the school further. The headteacher and executive headteacher are not resting on their laurels; they are aware of why the school is not yet outstanding and have set clear priorities for the coming year around the need to improve the consistency of good and better teaching.
- The ambition and drive of senior leaders is seen in their rigorous monitoring of teachers' performance. Well-managed and effective systems are in place to regularly collect information about the quality of lessons, students' work and the progress they are making.
- Teachers who are not performing to the high standards expected by senior leaders are provided with mentors and professional training. Senior leaders do not flinch from using more formal procedures when teachers fail to improve.
- Students' work and progress are regularly checked by heads of department and senior leaders. Clear assessment systems are in place to identify any student who requires additional support. Swift and effective support is provided, including one-to-one support,

additional resources and help with homework.

- The school's budget is well managed to get the best value for money for each student. This can be seen, for example, in the daily tutorial groups. These are organised so that students are gathered in small groups and mentored by an attached teacher. Year 7 students are helped to settle into their new school through being kept in separate small groups, whilst Year 8 to 11 students are organised into small mixed age groups with an attached teacher. These arrangements ensure students have regular time to talk with an adult about their learning and any support they might need.
- The school goes the extra mile to make sure individual students are supported for the right courses and subjects. As the students get older, there are a range of well-matched work-related opportunities with local colleges and businesses. Consequently, the numbers of students leaving school and going on to employment, further education or training have risen dramatically.
- The school requires very little support from the local authority.
- The governance of the school
 - The governing body are effective in holding senior leaders to account by consistently challenging improvement priorities such as the quality of teaching and academic achievement for all students. Governors are provided with a good range of additional information that helps them to monitor how well the school is performing in such matters as attendance, behaviour and child protection.
 - The governors are visible and active in the school and most take their responsibilities seriously. For example, the chair of governors is a mentor to some students who have additional social and personal challenges.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	116462
Local authority	Portsmouth City Council
Inspection number	401597

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 of pupils on the school roll	715
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Bunn
Headteacher	Adam Dare
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 November 2009
Telephone number	023 92370321
Fax number	023 92384811
Email address	head@kingrichardschool.net

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