



# King Richard Secondary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116462  
**Local Authority** Portsmouth  
**Inspection number** 290540  
**Inspection dates** 22–23 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Linda Kelsey HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Allaway Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Paulsgrove
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		Portsmouth PO6 4QP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	023 9237 0321
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	936	<b>Fax number</b>	023 9238 4811
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Bunn
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr B McClarin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–16	22–23 November 2006	290540

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

King Richard is in its first year as a specialist art college. It serves a local housing estate on the outskirts of Portsmouth in an area of significant social deprivation and low educational aspirations. Most students come from White British backgrounds with few from minority ethnic groups. Over a third of students are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. The school offers a wide diversity of courses and personalised learning.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is an effective and inclusive school providing a satisfactory quality of education. While standards are low, when pupils leave the school they have made sound progress. This is because the school with its good leadership has rightly focused on ensuring that the very high numbers of low attaining pupils are given the necessary skills, through a well thought out curriculum, to help them in their later life. As one parent commented 'he has come on in leaps and bounds and is happy'.

On starting in Year 7, over a third of pupils are working at levels below those expected for their age and nearly a half have significant learning difficulties. The good curriculum engages and motivates most pupils, many of whom might otherwise underachieve at school. An example of the schools' success can be seen in the much-improved attendance, now close to the national average. Equally significant is the increased number of pupils who achieve 5 A\* - G passes. This is close to the national figure even though these pupils started with exceptionally low standards.

The potential for improvement is good. Having brought about significant improvements in behaviour and attendance, and having raised the aspirations of the pupils, the school is now in a strong position to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. These are still too low, and this slows progress in some other subjects.

Personal development and the behaviour of students are satisfactory overall. Most students enjoy school and take pride in greeting visitors and helping them. Students are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles through opportunities for physical exercise both in lessons and after school. Provision for encouraging students economic well being is good. There are opportunities through ICT, literacy and numeracy classes to improve basic skills and use these in real life situations such as mini businesses and enterprises. Students make a good contribution to the community, both within and outside the school, and they attend work related learning activities. Students feel safe and tell us that although there is some bullying they are confident that it will be dealt with by an adult. Parents supported this view.

While over half the teaching seen was good, teaching is satisfactory overall because it varies in quality. In the best lessons, students are well motivated, stay on task and make good progress. Some lessons were outstanding, where good planning and talented delivery motivated students. Here consistently good progress was made. However, in the satisfactory lessons teachers are not making enough use of the data available on students' previous progress to plan lessons which will challenge them. In these lessons, some students take advantage of the situation to disrupt the flow, waste time by playing games on the computer and generally slow down the progress of all. Marking of students' work is often superficial and does not give enough feedback on how well they are doing.

Leadership and management are good and have been right in concentrating on the correct priorities for the needs of these students. The school has been innovative in how it has developed new approaches to improving achievement. For instance, the school's successful bid for specialist art's college status is allowing students to have

better aspirations for their future well-being. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve the basic skills in literacy and numeracy for all students so that standards in all subjects can rise.
- Raise the quality of the teaching and learning so that a higher majority of lessons are good.
- Improve assessment information at class room level and ensure more consistency in the quality of marking and feedback to students, and the quality of presentation of the students' work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although standards are low. This is supported by national data which shows that pupils' rate of progress overall between Year 7 and 11 has been within the top 10% of the country since 2003. In contrast, achievement is only satisfactory in English and mathematics.

When students enter the school in Year 7 the standard of their work is well below average. During Years 7 - 9 they make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and good progress in science. However, because of their low starting point, standards achieved in the national tests at the end of Year 9 are below average.

During Years 10 and 11 students make good progress overall. However, pupils' limited literacy skills have a significant impact in subjects where writing is a key part of the examination requirements. For instance, boys whose prior attainment is below average do not consistently respond well to the challenges implicit in coursework. As a result they do not achieve as well as girls.

Overall results in examinations at the end of Year 11 are below national averages. Standards have improved recently, although a few students with high absence records or with significant learning difficulties achieve poorly in examinations. Confirmation of the good progress by the majority of students can be seen in the proportion of students achieving five or more passes at higher grades in 2006, which is close to the national average.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Most students have positive attitudes to school. Their levels of attendance, which are now satisfactory, have improved during the last few years. Students are attentive and well behaved when teaching is good. In other lessons, however, students' enthusiasm is not always well focused on learning.

In the most effective lessons, students work well independently and in small groups. In others, students lack the skills to work independently and are over-reliant on asking the teacher for support. In some lessons, such as science, students with poor listening skills needed constant reminding about the importance of safe working practices.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. For example, drama students in Year 10 explore multi-cultural issues through their study of *The Crucible*. Students develop a sound understanding of different religions through, for example, studying Islam in religious education. Students make good use of and value the chaplaincy, arranged in conjunction with a local church. However, their ability to reflect on and discuss issues, such as the implications of world tragedies, is immature.

Students support various charities and take part in local events and initiatives. Student mentors support new students when they enter the school. They respond well to the opportunities to develop their workplace skills, although many are held back by their lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The quality of teaching is variable but is rarely less than satisfactory. In over half the lessons it is good and occasionally outstanding. Though students make good progress, the pace at which their learning improves is limited by inconsistencies in some of the classroom practice. The senior members of staff have identified a number of highly competent teachers and are beginning to use this information to support weaker teachers.

In the very best lessons, expectations are high, lessons are appropriately paced and the work is challenging. In other lessons there is a tendency for teachers to talk for too long and for the set tasks to be too easy. The school is committed to improving the students' literacy skills, but this is not done well in all classrooms. In the better lessons key vocabulary is used well to improve literacy; students are encouraged to improve their writing and there are good opportunities for them to discuss ideas, explain their thinking and make oral presentations. In weaker lessons such opportunities are not seized and insufficient attention is placed on how well the students present their written work.

The quality, consistency and regularity of marking are variable; some books are rarely marked and others merely contain a series of ticks with few helpful comments about how work can be improved. The use of assessment data to inform students about how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve, is inconsistent.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good and meets the needs of all students well. This is the main reason students are making good progress now from very low starting points. Improvements have been made in a number of ways. In Years 7, 8 and 9 some students are placed in accelerated courses including English and mathematics. All students in Years 10 and 11 now follow vocational options covering subjects such as health and social care, leisure and tourism and ICT. This development has made a positive impact on the students' achievements and levels of attainment and offers students more choices and better opportunities when they leave the school at 16. Specific courses have been introduced to cater for lower attainers and those who are disaffected with school. These alternatives offer the students opportunities to enhance their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and foster economic well-being by improving employment prospects. Though the school is pleased with these developments, insufficient thought has been given to how the achievements of the students might be measured and celebrated.

Enrichment and extra curricular provision is good, with a variety of activities offered. The conferring of specialist arts status has led to further improvements in the provision of literacy, citizenship and personal development. Specialist status has improved some aspects of the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through art appreciation, dance, drama and music productions.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good quality care and support and students, including those most at risk and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. Support staff are used extensively to help students. Many teachers offer help, guidance and assistance outside the classroom through homework and revision clubs.

Members of staff are committed to promoting the students' health and safety and there are good procedures for safeguarding students. Though some small inconsistencies were noted in the application of risk assessments, they are being addressed. The use of assessment and other data to raise standards is variable. Challenging targets are set and some of the monitoring procedures are detailed and robust. For instance, heads of years review the progress of all students against their targets at five different times in the academic year and outcomes are reported to parents.

Students know their targets but do not always know how well they are working in relation to their targets or what they might need to do to improve. The students are given good advice on their future career options and the school works well with external agencies to enhance the quality of education.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The teaching staff and the leadership team work well together and there is a shared vision of the way that the school should develop particularly in the context of its well-chosen specialist arts status. The headteacher leads the school effectively through a collegiate approach that is moving the school forward well.

The promotion of an improved quality of learning in the classroom and on improving the basic skills of students has a very high priority. There is an ethos of facilitating improvement through innovation in the curriculum and in management - for example the challenge of recruiting teaching staff is being addressed by a high level of involvement in training programmes. These two initiatives have led to good progress in academic performance, better attendance and much improved attitudes of students.

The management team also encourages students to make their views known and the Student Council is very active in supporting development - it makes a valuable contribution through its involvement in interviewing potential members of staff.

The school has had difficulties over management of the English and mathematics departments and is now re-structuring these to make the best use of the available expertise. Teaching areas and resources are used and managed very well and every effort is made to create safe and pleasant learning environments. This is despite the overall inadequacy of the school buildings with its constant leaking roofs.

Self-evaluation is good and all aspects of school performance are monitored effectively. Monitoring of teaching is rigorous and has led to the school being able to identify and use the expertise of the strongest teachers to support other colleagues. Assessment procedures and data are now being used well at a whole school level to ensure that students are more likely to achieve their full potential.

Financial and other resources are well managed and students particularly value the new ICT resources and the learning resource centre. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development; they are very well informed and provide good support for the school. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### 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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school during our recent inspection visit. We spoke to many of you in class and when meeting you for more formal discussion. Many of your parents have returned questionnaires. We would like to share the findings of the inspection with you.

Your headteacher and his senior staff are good and have developed an interesting and stimulating curriculum for you to study. Many of you work hard and some of you do well in your examinations. Many of you are getting good at making sure you leave school with better qualifications. However, standards are too low and too many of you are still leaving school without good English and mathematics skills. We think this could be improved by better teaching and better behaviour in class by more students. Although most students are polite and courteous around the school behaviour is not good enough in classes, particularly when some of the lessons are not interesting enough to challenge you.

We have asked your headteacher to work at improving a number of things. These are to improve

- Standards of work so more of you gain higher qualifications and have improved basic skills.
- Teaching so more lessons are of good quality and are interesting.
- The quality of marking your books so that your presentation improves and you get feedback from teachers about how well you are doing.

We wish you all the best of luck for the future.

Linda Kelsey HMI