

# King Richard School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116462
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	338822
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanna Beckford-Hall 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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	820
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Bunn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Adam Dare
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Allaway Avenue Paulsgrove Portsmouth PO6 4QP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. Inspectors scrutinised students' work during lessons and looked at a range of school documentation including school policies, student tracking and assessment data, and records of governing body meetings.

Inspectors also took account of the views expressed in 58 parental questionnaires, and the views in staff and student questionnaires

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether targets are sufficiently challenging for all students to continually raise attainment, especially for gifted and talented students
- how effectively the school raises attainment and accelerates progress of School Action Plus students
- the extent to which learning and progress in lessons is good throughout the school
- the quality of teaching and use of assessment to see if all lessons are good and whether marking helps students know how to improve their work
- the effectiveness of the school's strategies to tackle persistent absence and low attendance.

## Information about the school

King Richard School is a smaller secondary school than average, with a student intake that is predominantly of White British ethnicity. The proportion of students receiving free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average, with many students having behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The school achieved specialist arts status in 2006 and this is an important part of the work of the school.

**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

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Some aspects are good such as the curriculum, teaching and learning and behaviour. The specialist arts status gives students valuable opportunities to be creative and develop self-confidence by performing in dance, drama and musical productions. The visual and performing arts are used well in personal, social and health education, successfully promoting students' understanding of social and moral issues.

Students start Year 7 with very low starting points. The good teaching, combined with an increasingly imaginative curriculum, helps most students make good progress, although the most able are not always stretched and the progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is more variable. Some make good progress while others make only satisfactory progress because learning is not always well planned to meet their individual needs.

The school works hard to provide good academic support and guidance to vulnerable students and those who find committing to learning a real challenge. Sometimes, this leads to good progress for these students but, for too many students, attendance remains poor. A group of students is persistently absent from school. Despite the school's strenuous efforts, attendance remains low in relation to the national average. Too many parents are failing to make sure their children turn up regularly and do not see the link between future success and good attendance. This is an enormous shame because teaching, learning and the varied curriculum, all good features of the school, are being missed by some students, which severely limits their progress.

Some outcomes for students are good. Students know well how to keep safe and they have good understanding of key issues affecting teenage lives such as knife crime, substance abuse and dangers of alcohol. Students say occasional bullying incidents are dealt with effectively and they know about effects of homophobic and racist abuse on people's lives. Although there have been a few incidents of bullying recently, these have been effectively dealt with by leaders. Overall, students have good social and moral awareness.

Behaviour is good because teachers consistently apply the school's code of conduct in lessons and around the school. High staff presence at break time keeps students on their toes in respecting their school environment. Students had mixed views about behaviour but inspectors judged that there is a shared understanding of what is acceptable and what is not, and that good behaviour has led to better attitudes to learning. Inspectors saw many good lessons where students made good progress because they were attentive. Those who attend do enjoy most of their lessons. A

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student commented that 'I learn a lot at this school' while another student wrote 'King Richard is a wonderful school and will be the key to my future.'

Despite low levels of literacy and numeracy, students' preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory. The curriculum provides good opportunities for developing transferable skills for the future. Teamwork, presentation skills, problem solving and competence in using information and communication technology (ICT) are embedded in the daily curriculum and in enterprise activities. At Key Stage 4, the range of vocational courses, coupled with work experience with local businesses, helps students consolidate these key skills in the workplace. Students appreciate input by guest speakers from the police and fire service, helping them understand these professions.

The headteacher and executive headteacher demonstrate a passionate energy to continually improve the school. Staff commit to a vision of purposeful, systematic improvement, especially in teaching. This energetic drive to steadily raise standards and secure a better quality of teaching has been successful. However, the school has been insufficiently challenging in forcing down levels of persistent absence. The energy of all staff now needs to address low attendance and reduce the impact this has on some students who are not meeting their potential. Senior leaders have a broadly accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, although some judgements in the school's evaluation are generous. Overall, the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

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

- Improve attendance by substantially reducing persistent absence so that a higher proportion of students can benefit from the good teaching at the school.
- Strengthen parental engagement by:
  - finding ways to work with parents and carers to help them support their child's learning and well-being
  - establishing stronger and more effective links with all groups in the local community to raise aspirations for students, parents and carers from different socio-economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by consistently using good assessment information to:
  - plan lessons which effectively differentiate learning to meets the needs of all students, providing high levels of challenge for gifted and talented students as well as supporting students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

While standards have improved over the last four years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 remains low. In 2009, the proportion of students gaining five or more higher

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grades at GCSE level, including English and mathematics, rose to 32% and the attainment gap between boys and girls is steadily closing. The school's evidence of current progress indicates that most students are on track to achieve better results in 2010 with a further rise in those gaining five or more higher grades at GCSE level, including English and mathematics. The core of persistent poor attendees make limited progress.

Inspection evidence from lesson observations confirms that most students are currently making good progress, reflecting the good teaching. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good levels of support but some only make satisfactory progress because work is not always suited to their particular needs. Gifted and talented students told inspectors they would like more challenge in lessons.

Students understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and why this is important, but many do not put good knowledge into practice. They do not take advantage of the new fitness suite or other physical pursuits at the school. A range of dance activities engage more girls in physical exercise than previously. Student and parent questionnaires indicate concerns about the food in the canteen. The student council is pursuing this with leaders at the school.

Students' spiritual and cultural understanding is satisfactory. The school is reviewing how to enhance students' understanding of different faiths and traditions both across the United Kingdom and from other cultures in less well-developed countries.

The student council has a proactive voice across the school. Views of the council are responded to by governors who attend their meetings. Some students are consistently involved in making good contributions to national charitable work and school productions. Designing a new mural 'welcome to our community' for the local underpass successfully integrated students from different schools, changing the underpass from walls of graffiti into images representing the local community. Despite some students' regular involvement, there are many whose contribution to wider local and national community work is more limited because they do not take part in opportunities such as performing at the local carnival or the arts-based community projects.

*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>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3

<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.

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<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</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> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Inspectors saw one outstanding lesson and many good ones, which were characterised by:

- teachers' good subject knowledge
- good use of peer assessment, particularly in English, dance and drama lessons
- carefully structured lessons which effectively use electronic whiteboards
- effective use of assessment information to track progress
- good quality marking
- use of praise to motivate and raise students' self-esteem
- use of probing questioning that challenged students' thinking
- successful work of teaching assistants to support learning
- high expectations in lessons.

These positive characteristics reflect impressive efforts to improve teaching and the use of assessment to raise achievement. Relationships between students and teachers are good. Students value the good marking of their work. For most students, this purposefully guides them to improve their work but a few commented that they need more discussion with teachers about how to apply what the marking says they need to do. Occasionally, teaching does not provide different types of activities, resources or different levels of pace to meet the needs of every student in the class.

The curriculum has personalised courses, particularly at Key Stage 4, and is innovative in using the arts across the curriculum. Drama, dance, media, art and music successfully develop creativity, team working skills and peer appraisal, and support thematic work in personal, social and health education and citizenship. Students are very positive about the arts curriculum, work with guest artists, and regular workshops with a company who combine creativity and technology, and many trips to theatre performances. The impact of such work is also starting to raise literacy and numeracy levels. The Key Stage 3 curriculum has been reviewed and incorporates personal learning and thinking skills. Senior leaders recognise that further review is needed to find ways to maximise literacy and numeracy development from Year 7 onwards because of very poor attainment in these areas on entry.

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Traditional GCSE courses, vocational programmes in health and social care, modern foreign languages, information communication technology and science, as well as BTEC diplomas and certificates in acting, dance and arts, match the needs and interests of most students. Enrichment activities offer a good choice for students but take-up is variable across student groups. The involvement of many students in school productions does, however, reflect the impact of the arts across the school.

Pastoral support for students has many good features. Students feel confident that their concerns will be listened to. Vulnerable students who are at risk and those in public care are effectively supported through good liaison with social workers and carers as part of multi-agency work with the school. Guidance about work experience, employment and further education constructively guides students in Years 10 and 11. However, despite effective provision for care, guidance and support, the impact of this in addressing poor attendance of some highly disaffected students has not succeeded in pushing attendance to above average for all students. This is particularly so for persistent absentees who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders and governors set high expectations of all staff. There is a strong commitment of all staff to the vision for the school. School improvement plans provide clear direction and targets for improvement. Teaching and learning have improved because of effective monitoring by all leaders, with a purposeful focus on how to improve classroom practice. Middle leaders are increasingly held to account by senior leaders, leading to better action at department level. Students at risk of underachieving are quickly identified and leaders redirect resources so that students receive targeted support in small group and one-to-one work in English and mathematics.

Governors provide committed and enthusiastic support for the leaders, making sure that school improvement targets are focused on delivering positive impact on students' learning and well-being. Minutes of meetings reveal good levels of vigorous debate to solve problems. The Chair of Governors fully accepts that more effort has to be placed on improving attendance and finding ways to engage parents and carers in educating their children.

Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Good systems ensure risk assessments are diligently followed through. Staff training is tightly



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focused in helping everyone understand how to safeguard students and deal with any concerns they may have.

Local partnerships support good curriculum provision and staff development is enhanced through mentoring of trainee teachers. The impact of partnership links to address local community issues and parental engagement is satisfactory. Leaders are acutely aware that changing the perceptions of some parents through increased communication and work with parents who are often isolated for social or economic reasons, has to be tackled if the school is to provide a better education for all students.

Leaders have carefully evaluated how to deliver equality of opportunity through a more inclusive curriculum, selecting courses where most students can thrive as young people as well as trying to improve academic standards.

Leaders have improved cohesion within the school community and students' comments to inspectors support this. There is a clear understanding of complex socio-economic and health issues in the local community but analysis and evaluation of religious and ethnic characteristics of community work is more limited. The development of a community cohesion action plan and cycle of evaluation is embryonic. Senior leaders have yet to determine more effective methods for accessing and engaging with parents and families in challenging social and economic circumstances as well as those for whom education holds little attraction.

*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	2
<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>3</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>2</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**

The number of completed questionnaires received by the inspection team was very low.

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This low level response is also indicative of the many challenges faced by the school in trying to engage with parents. The vast majority of parents who did respond to the questionnaire were supportive of the work of the school and feel it is well led and managed. Some parental questionnaires indicated that parents want more help in learning how to support their children's progress. The inspectors agree that leaders should continue to raise parental engagement not only to support academic achievement but also to remedy issues with attendance.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King Richard 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 810 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	29	38	66	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	43	32	55	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	64	19	33	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	38	33	57	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	33	36	62	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	31	33	57	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	28	35	60	5	9	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)	20	34	32	55	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	33	32	57	5	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	41	28	48	3	5	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	21	39	67	4	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	36	36	62	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	45	31	53	1	2	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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 pupil's 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.**



27 November 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of King Richard School, Portsmouth, PO6 4QP

Thank you for the help you gave us when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work in lessons and hearing about the activities that some of you take part in.

We have judged the overall effectiveness of your school as satisfactory. There are features of your school's work which are good, such as the curriculum and teaching. The visual and performing arts work is a real strength at your school. Many of you enjoy developing problem solving, team working and performance skills that will help your future working lives.

Most students uphold the code of conduct in lessons and around the school. Your good behaviour and better attitudes to learning mean that most of you now enjoy lessons and make good progress.

Although your school has some good features, it has been less successful in helping those students who miss school on a regular basis to improve their attendance. Levels of attendance at your school are not acceptable. This will not help every student reach his or her potential. You can all play your part in helping each other to see why the opportunities your school provides are so important to achieving what you want in your future lives.

We have asked your headteacher to work with all staff to:

- improve attendance across the school
- work with your parents, carers and other residents much more in your local community so that you feel supported in coming to school
- plan lessons which give some of you much more challenge as well as supporting those of you who need different kinds of activities, so that all students can make at least good progress.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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