

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109327
Local authority	Bristol
Inspection number	377913
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Karl Sampson HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1514
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Bale
Headteacher	Mrs Elisabeth Gilpin
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Karl Sampson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Harrett	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anne Barrett	Additional inspector
David Howe	Additional inspector
Phil Taylor	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors carried out observations of three full lessons, and 38 part lessons taught by 38 teachers. Ten of the lessons were jointly observed by a member of the school's leadership team. One inspector undertook a learning walk which comprised of a number of short visits to lessons to look at provision for lower ability students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and different groups of students. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of the school's work, policy documents and students' work. They analysed 315 questionnaires sent in by parents and carers, questionnaires completed by a sample of students from each year group and 44 completed by staff.

Information about the school

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School is much larger than most secondary schools. The school draws most of its students from across the city of Bristol as well as from a number of neighbouring authorities. The large majority are of White British heritage and most speak English as their first language. Thirty percent of students are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is half that found nationally. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is much lower than that found nationally. The school has held humanities specialist status since 2004 and was designated as a Gifted and Talented specialist school in 2009. The school holds the International School award and is also in receipt of the Healthy Schools award. The school meets the current floor standard.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school with an ethos of high aspiration and success for all, underpinned by a dynamic culture of learning and continuous improvement.
- Students achieve outstandingly well, making good progress at Key Stage 3 and more rapid and sustained progress at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form to secure excellent academic outcomes, regardless of ability, starting point or special educational need.
- Excellent relationships at all levels have helped to establish a cohesive, purposeful and happy community where behaviour is excellent and all are able to learn and thrive in an atmosphere of respect and dignity.
- Leadership and management are outstanding, driven by a principled, enthusiastic and approachable headteacher. She is supported by a highly skilled and innovative group of school leaders and together they drive improvement resolutely and with the best interests of the students in mind.
- Teaching is outstanding. Learning moves along briskly, questions are probing and tasks are creative, imaginative and challenging. As a result, students' interest is captured and they articulate ideas fluently and with confidence.
- Leaders have focused on raising the quality of teaching with conspicuous success. Focused professional development, rigorous quality assurance, the impact of the humanities specialism and the innovative work of the empowered learning team are being used well to drive further improvements in teaching.
- While consistently good, teaching in Key Stage 3 is not as strong as in the upper school because the learning activities are not always sufficiently tailored to fully meet individual needs in all lessons.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students achieve extremely well, have high expectations for the future and most progress to higher education, with an increasing number securing Oxbridge places each year.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional in all aspects, and is a strong feature in many lessons and aspects of the curriculum.
- The degree of parental satisfaction with the work of the school is extremely high. However, a few parents felt that the school's work would be further enhanced by more regular communication from the learning support team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching in Key Stage 3 is consistently outstanding as in the upper school by:
 - sharing the very best practice in meeting individual needs.
- Improve communication so that it is more regular between parents and the learning support team.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspirational leadership, consistently high quality teaching and an excellent curriculum tailored to meet individual needs enable all groups of students to flourish. Students enter the school with above average standards and make excellent progress, as evidenced by high attainment and consistent improvement in GCSE and A Level examination results over the last three years from what was already a strong starting point. Attainment is significantly above the national average for A*/A and A*-C passes in the majority of GCSE subjects. The school's performance in English, mathematics, science and the specialist subjects of history, religious studies and geography is particularly impressive. Higher attaining students report that the school 'stretches' them to attain the best possible grades. In 2011, over half of all students achieved three or more A*/A grades at GCSE. Achievement in the sixth form is exceptionally strong and has continued to rise over time. The school achieved its best ever results in 2011 and nearly two thirds of students achieved A*-B grades in their final examinations. The students surveyed and spoken to by inspectors, including those that join the school in the sixth form, attribute their progress to the quality of teaching and exceptional care that they receive as they move through the school.

The school consistently adds significant value to the performance of all groups of students across the range of subjects. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. Teaching assistants and teachers communicate well to ensure that each student receives well-targeted support. Despite high attainment, analysis of progress in mathematics overall for a small number of lower ability students and students eligible for free school meals shows that in the past students have not achieved as well as they could have. A sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching, strengthening of leadership and management, and a more sophisticated approach to tracking performance have helped to even out the gaps in achievement. As a result, all students now make at least good progress, with an increasing number making outstanding progress. The standards seen in lessons and students' books and the school's latest analysis of current performance indicate that the progress of all groups continues to be rapid and sustained. Consequently, current Key Stage 4 and sixth form students are well placed to meet their challenging targets.

Students collaborate willingly during lessons, readily taking on roles within teams and supporting each other's learning through sensitive feedback. They demonstrate strengths in literacy, use new technologies effectively and particularly appreciate

lessons which offer them frequent opportunities to extend and explain their thinking. Inspectors saw many examples of students' ability to discuss maturely and reflect thoughtfully upon ethical dilemmas. The curriculum and humanities specialism makes an outstanding contribution to students' achievement and enjoyment of school life. It engages students in learning and helps them to gain what they need to take the next steps in their education, training or employment with skill and great confidence.

Quality of teaching

Students and their parents rightly express great confidence in the quality of teaching. Lessons are well paced, relevant and enjoyable, providing many opportunities for achievements to be shared, celebrated and built upon. In a Year 10 English lesson, middle ability students were expertly supported by the teacher so that all students were able to fully explore the interplay of theme and character. The combination of task and topic were brought alive by deft and skilful questioning throughout. Consequently, the quality of responses and thought behind students' reflections upon right and wrong, friendship, dreams and violence was superb and reflected fully the outstanding progress that all had made. A GCSE physics lesson made use of a range of assessment activities and high quality dialogue to constantly relate the topic material to current scientific practice in the outside world. As a result, the teacher was able to empower students to articulate and then apply the key features required to analyse, improve and secure their knowledge and understanding.

The qualities of the consistently good and often outstanding teaching include:

- high expectations, not just in terms of achievement, but in the amount, complexity and challenge of learning activities covered in lessons
- excellent subject knowledge and understanding of how to pace learning so that time for imaginative and engaging activities is used flexibly, and students are able to generate exciting questions of their own and develop new lines of enquiry
- effective questioning and supplementary responses that secure understanding and deepen thinking by ensuring that all students are able to justify, extend and qualify their answers
- excellent integration of literacy and communication skills across the curriculum through the development of oracy, constant reference to key vocabulary and common approaches to secure high quality extended writing
- exemplary use of success criteria and academic guidance, especially at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, to identify next steps on what and how to improve further. Students say how much they value this and several groups of older students spoke highly of the use made of examination criteria by teachers to enable sharply focused self-assessment.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school has a very effective behaviour management system and teachers consistently demand high standards of conduct. The school has made innovative use of the new building so that behaviour systems and support structures are integrated into the design, ensuring an excellent climate for learning. As a result, behaviour in lessons is a strong factor in the students' learning. They are attentive, engage very

positively with the teaching and show ambition and great enjoyment of their learning. Teachers establish respectful relationships with students and consistently ensure a climate which values creative thinking and builds self-esteem. On occasions where students make poor behaviour choices, inspection evidence shows that students respond well to the school's strategies and turn things around quickly. Learning mentors and restorative approaches are deployed to excellent effect to relentlessly pursue positive resolutions.

Attendance is well above average and students are punctual to school and lessons. Relationships are harmonious and students feel exceptionally safe. They have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying and say that bullying is rare and not tolerated. However, when bullying does occur, students have an extremely high degree of confidence that it is dealt with swiftly. The views of parents and carers, staff and students and an analysis of the school's comprehensive tracking data indicate that incidents of poor behaviour are increasingly infrequent. They also confirm the effectiveness of the school's support and reintegration for the small number of students who exhibit more challenging behaviour. Inspectors observed numerous examples of how the school has linked with other agencies and families to improve the lives of children in difficult circumstances.

Leadership and management

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has been pivotal in developing a clear and unwavering vision for the school built around a strong Christian ethos and the fulfillment of every student's potential. The clarity of vision is matched by the quality of support given to staff to secure improvements and maintain standards, even where they are already outstanding. Teamwork and collegiality are evident within a harmonious and cohesive community, where all members show respect and tolerance for others. Considerable emphasis is placed on ensuring that all students feel equally valued while maintaining a sense of their individuality and cultural identity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. It manifests itself in outstanding achievement as well as the ability of the school to engage with each individual within an excellent curriculum that deepens and broadens their experience and makes a strong contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Although this is an institution which thrives on innovation, it is also strongly self-evaluative and reflects the highest aspirations for pupils and expectations of staff. This relentless vision for excellence ensures that no individual is left behind and is grounded in detailed and sophisticated monitoring and evaluation. The impact of the humanities specialism and the work of the empowered learning team have been instrumental in the development of teaching. The establishment of cross-subject learning communities has tangibly raised the quality of professional development and created an environment where training and discussion about learning are highly valued. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and achievement has risen to a consistently high level. School leaders demonstrate excellent capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

Safeguarding is afforded high priority and every care is taken to ensure that the school is safe and that policies and procedures are rigorous and meticulously

maintained. The governing body provides enthusiastic and committed support and makes a strong contribution to the strategic direction of the school. Its excellent knowledge and understanding of the school's performance is utilised well to challenge and immediately rectify any relative underperformance. Governors are well attuned to parents' views. The small number of concerns expressed by parents in relation to learning support and some low-level disruptive behaviour in lessons were carefully followed up by inspectors to a satisfactory conclusion.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, Bristol BS1 6RT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Particular thanks to those of you who gave up your time to speak with us and those of you who completed the questionnaire. I am delighted to inform you that we judged your school to be outstanding.

The school's inclusive ethos of high aspirations and success for all provide you with a great platform for learning. We were particularly impressed by your behaviour and your very positive attitudes to learning. As a result, relationships between staff and students are superb. You make excellent academic progress over your time at the school and in the sixth form and enjoy your education because of the consistently good and often outstanding teaching. Your lessons are interesting and you told us how much you enjoy them. You particularly appreciate the positive benefits that the new buildings, the curriculum and the school's specialist status have brought. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through the curriculum and underpins your outstanding academic and personal development. Consequently, you are extremely well prepared for life beyond school.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Mrs Gilpin sets high standards in all aspects of the school's work and she is very well supported by the other staff and governors. Although the school is already outstanding, staff are committed to continuing its improvement and are all ambitious to make it even better in the future.

We have asked the school to:

- share the very best practice that exists more widely across the curriculum and use it to help you to make even better progress in Key Stage 3
- ensure that the good work with parents and the learning support team is improved by more regular communication.

You are rightly proud to belong to this outstanding school; thank you for playing your part in making it such an exciting and caring place. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Karl Sampson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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