

Yateley School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116433
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357965
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	John Seal

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1557
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Cairns
Headteacher	Mr Mark Jackman
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Telephone number	01252 879222
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Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group 11–18

Inspection dates 24–25 November 2010

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. They observed 51 lessons which involved seeing 51 teachers. Meetings were held with students, staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: data on students' progress; a range of policies and planning documents; minutes of meetings; the school's self-evaluation documents; risk assessments; financial information; and the single central record of safeguarding checks on staff. The team analysed questionnaires returned by 316 parents and carers, 156 students and 77 staff.

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

- The speed and pace of students' learning.
- How well teachers use information about students' learning to help them make progress.
- How effective the senior leaders and managers are in checking that students are making enough progress and how good the teaching is.
- The effectiveness of how the school collects, monitors and assesses information about its performance.

Information about the school

Yateley is larger than average and is an arts specialist college. A very large proportion of students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The percentage of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is about the same as the national average. Their needs include specific or moderate learning difficulties. The school has achieved the Sportsmark and Artsmark gold awards. The governing body manages an on-site childcare and nursery provision which was inspected at the same time as 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Yateley is a good and rapidly improving school. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard and rightly so. It has many strengths which include:

- good teaching
- a good curriculum
- provision of good care, guidance and support
- good Early Years Foundation Stage provision
- a strong and vibrant sixth form.

The school has made great steps forward since its last inspection; the headteacher, appointed in September 2009, has been unflinching in his quest for higher standards and better quality of teaching.

Yateley students are positive and responsive to their life at school. This is clearly seen in their:

- above average attendance rates
- good and sometimes outstanding behaviour; students say they feel safe and cared for, incidences of bullying are rare and when they happen are tackled efficiently
- very positive attitudes towards their learning and school life in general
- positive and friendly attitudes and relationships towards each other and staff.

Teaching is good and there is some exemplary practice. However, occasionally, there are instances when some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively. For example, students' progress is not always supported well enough by providing them with clear feedback about their next steps in learning.

The school has had a long track record of above average GCSE results which has typically met most students' attainment on entry. 2010 saw a significant upswing in results leading to well above average standards at the end of Key Stage 4.

The school has suitable safeguarding systems and procedures. These approaches to safeguarding have very recently been implemented and administration systems with regard to this are becoming more rigorous. Consequently, all staff appointed have been checked before they work with children.

The practical promotion of community cohesion is effective, with appropriate links to a school in Africa and many examples of how the school works with the local community. However, there is no audit or plan of the school's work and priorities in this area. As a result, provision for community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good.

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The headteacher, senior managers and governing body have ensured recent improvements are becoming embedded. Their high expectations, positive impact on standards and quality of provision underline the school's good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of the teaching and learning further by:
 - ensuring nearly all teaching is at least as good as the best in the school by the end of July 2011
 - using student assessment information more accurately to inform lesson planning
 - improving detailed feedback to individual students which should include: informing students of their next steps in learning, incisive questioning and constructive marking.
- Applying the same rigour employed to track and analyse student progress to all data analysis, particularly with regard to:
 - the administrative systems for safeguarding
 - auditing and identifying priorities for community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school's renewed focus on increasing levels of attainment over the last year has ensured that there has been a significant increase in the proportion of students achieving five A* to C GCSEs including English and mathematics. This is well above the national average and higher than the school has achieved in previous years. Its specialist status has ensured that GCSEs in subjects such as drama, graphics and dance are well above the national average. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, most students' progress is generally good and their attainment is continuing to be high.

Different groups of students, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, are effectively identified early on in their school life and very well supported by the well-led and managed support team. As a result, they make good progress throughout their time in the school and their attainment is generally higher than expected for students with similar needs.

Most students and parents and carers feel the lunchtime meals have healthy options, and there are good participation rates for physical activities. While the school's provision for supporting healthy lifestyles is good overall, a few parents and carers and students expressed the view that more could be done to encourage a better understanding of how to live a healthier lifestyle. The large majority of students spoken to or who returned questionnaires indicated very strongly that they felt very safe in the school.

The students have good basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology; these, in conjunction with their positive attitudes to working together and forming good relationships, ensure they are well prepared for the future.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Since the arrival of the headteacher a year ago, there has, quite rightly, been a strong emphasis on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, there is an even larger proportion of good teaching across the school than there was at the time of the last inspection.

The key features of the school's good or better lessons are:

- clear use of information about students' prior learning in lesson plans
- students demonstrate a good ability to learn independently
- high expectations by teachers of what students are capable of
- effective explanation of what students have to do to reach the next steps in their learning
- good use of questioning based on teachers' well-grounded subject knowledge
- pacey, exciting and practical activities which provide students with good opportunities to practise and extend their skills and knowledge.

The school is well aware of the remaining satisfactory lessons. These are being effectively addressed by senior leaders and managers. In these lessons:

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- assessment information regarding students' attainment and progress is not used to inform planning
- learning activities are not matched to the different abilities of students, which slows down their learning or does not provide enough support when they find something difficult
- teachers talk for too long and do not provide students with enough opportunities for hands-on learning
- during lessons, students are not provided with helpful verbal or written feedback to highlight their next steps or how to achieve a better grade.

The curriculum is well organised and thoughtful, and meets the needs of students well. There are some good examples of how the school works in partnership with other providers and vocational provision is well established and effective. There have been improvements to how the Key Stage 3 curriculum is organised, starting with Year 7 students. As a result, the learning needs of students of different abilities are more closely met but these have not been in place long enough to evaluate their full impact.

Literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills are generally taught well, but they are not always applied consistently across different subjects. In Key Stage 4, students have a wide variety of pathway options which cater for their needs well. However, many of the initiatives are quite recent and are just beginning to have a positive impact on promoting students' learning even further. There is a very wide range of activities which enrich the curriculum including clubs for science, art and cooking. To underpin the effective work of its specialist status, the school successfully entered the 'Rock Challenge' competition.

The school cares well for its students. Many of them talk positively about their transition from primary school and older students feel they are prepared well for leaving school or moving on into the sixth form. Vulnerable students and their families are well supported through the school's effective partnership work with other agencies including the Educational Psychology Service and social care agencies. The recent introduction of the school's house system is providing students with effective pastoral care. The school employs a range of support staff including a full-time school nurse, a Connexions counsellor and parent support advisers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The current high standards, good student progress and improving quality of teaching can be directly attributed to the unambiguous expectations of the headteacher. His leadership has enabled senior managers have a greater sense of purpose and autonomy. Consequently, they have increased their rigour in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The role of the governing body is increasingly influential. It has a clear understanding of what the school is good at and what it needs to do to improve further. It is developing a strong approach to holding the school to account. The school's very low tolerance of discrimination and high expectations has resulted in very little difference in outcomes for different groups and swift action to tackle any potential inequality. The school's links with parents and carers are strongly underpinned with good communication processes. As a result, parents and carers feel confident to approach the school to discuss their children's progress and well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Babies and children are provided with a safe and secure environment. Although there are strong links with parents and carers which result in positive relationships, the setting recognises even more can be done to improve these links even further. The setting ensures that the very young children and babies are given close and constant care and attention. All staff maintain a clean, safe and stimulating environment. The older children are encouraged effectively by the staff to develop their independent skills and there is a good mix of adult- and child-led activities over the day. There is a good team approach across the setting and their effective planning ensures children have access to a good range of resources and activities. The well-qualified staff are conscientious in the assessments of children's development which are regularly completed in line with the six

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areas of learning. The outdoor learning environment has developed well since the last inspection and there are good plans to enrich this area even further with even more stimulating activities.

The nursery is led well by the experienced nursery leader and her deputy. They have made sure that all the areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed and know what to do to improve further. In addition, they maintain an up-to-date set of policies and procedures including those for safeguarding. As a result of the good leadership and management, the strong and cohesive team has created a caring, warm and friendly place for children and babies to develop safely and happily.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Sixth form

There is a picture of steady improvement which has accelerated rapidly in the last year. This is because of the relentless drive and excellent leadership and management of the sixth form over recent years. Consequently, students make good and, in some subjects, outstanding progress resulting in above average attainment at A and AS level, including at the highest grades, and exceptional progress in the BTEC courses. Advice and guidance for students is personalised and well matched resulting in the majority of them being on courses in which they will do well.

Students value the wide range of enrichment provided, including the opportunity to run activities for younger students, such as producing plays in the House drama competition. They are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive with many choosing to continue their learning at Yateley after Key Stage 4. Most teaching motivates and engages students. In the best lessons, students take responsibility for their own learning, working collaboratively and challenging one another. However, in a few lessons, passive learning persists and skills for independent learning are not fully developed.

Tracking systems to alert students, teachers and parents and carers to any underachievement are well developed and keenly focused on the most vulnerable. The head of sixth form's determination to improve results and the quality of learning for all students has established a climate for learning that is ambitious, safe and inclusive. A student described it as 'a great place to grow in confidence and individuality'.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires were highly positive and supportive of the school. In all responses, other than the one concerned with developing a healthy lifestyle, the responses were above the current national benchmarks for agreeing with the statements. Inspectors found no evidence to support the concerns during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yateley 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 316 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1557 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	150	47	156	49	9	3	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	160	51	153	48	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	138	44	171	54	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	145	46	152	48	11	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	116	37	182	58	8	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	101	32	183	58	16	5	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	24	193	61	32	10	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)	133	42	161	51	1	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	136	43	163	59	9	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	114	36	175	55	13	4	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	87	28	198	63	10	3	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	170	54	141	45	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	178	56	129	41	2	1	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



16 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Yateley School, Yateley GU46 6NW

You might remember that we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with your friendliness and good behaviour. Many of you completed questionnaires and some of you met with inspectors to talk about your school life.

Many of you told us that Yateley is a good school and we agree. There have been many improvements since the last time the school was inspected. Examples of what the school does well include:

- encouraging you to attend regularly and, as a result, your attendance is above average
- enabling more of you achieving better GCSE results
- providing more good lessons
- a good and improving curriculum
- developing better ways in which the school looks after you
- good leadership and management
- the sixth form is led excellently and helps you gain good grades
- the nursery is well led and the children who attend are well looked after.

The inspectors talked with your headteacher, staff and governors about what areas the school could improve. We agreed with the points in their good plans, which have already identified the following:

- increasing the amount of good lessons and ensuring you all understand what you need to do to make even better progress
- making sure safeguarding systems are always up-to-date
- writing plans which help you continue to learn about the different backgrounds and beliefs of people who live further afield in this country and around the world.

The team hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Yateley and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Seal

Her Majesty's Inspector

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