

# Admiral Lord Nelson School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116476
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	357980
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline White 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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1003
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pat Brooks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steven Labeledz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dundas Lane Portsmouth PO3 5XT
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 364 536
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They observed 36 lessons and 35 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, the senior and middle leaders and groups of students. They looked at the school's data on students' performance, records of the support provided to them and their progress. The inspection team received and analysed 128 parental and carers' questionnaires, and 145 responses to a survey of students. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's improvement plans, policies and procedures, including health and safety and risk assessments.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of teaching in accelerating and consolidating students' progress across subjects including:
  - the reliability of teacher assessment
  - the use of assessment to support learning
  - strategies for developing students' capacity to learn independently.
- The impact of systems for identifying and tackling any underachievement in subjects and particular student groups.
- The capacity of leaders at all levels to secure and sustain improved outcomes for students.

## Information about the school

This average sized secondary school became a specialist school for business and enterprise in 2003. There are significantly more boys in the school than girls and the ratio of boys to girls also varies significantly between year groups. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. There are very few students who are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Although the percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average, the number with a statement of special educational needs is high. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Investor in People, Gold Artsmark, Silver Sportsmark and Stage 2 Investors in Careers.

**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

This is a good school which provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its students and promotes their personal development very well.

In recent years, students' attainment by the time they leave school has been broadly average. It is a mark of the school's good capacity for improvement that, in most subjects, students are now making good progress and attainment is rising. Skilful development of the curriculum, strengthened management systems and more effective assessment practice in a range of subject areas are evidence of the school's determined commitment to continuous improvement. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that teaching overall is good. The warm and caring relationships between teachers and students create a positive learning ethos. Teachers have comprehensive information about their students' prior attainment and any particular learning needs. However, sometimes that knowledge is not used well to ensure that students are, first, challenged appropriately in all lessons and, second, experience a breadth of learning styles that will develop their independence. These weaknesses underlie some remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and unevenness in students' progress across subjects.

The curriculum is very well matched to the needs of students. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is appreciated by students and makes an important contribution to their enjoyment of learning and school life. Above average attendance is testament to students' strong sense of being valued as individuals and belonging. There are excellent opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and get involved in school, community and international improvement projects. It is to their credit that so many make a very positive contribution to these projects. Specialism in business and enterprise supports students' future economic well-being by fostering their entrepreneurial spirit and developing skills that will help them to succeed in the workplace. Excellent support and guidance ensure students are confident in making well-informed decisions about future employment or the next stage of education and training.

The headteacher's clear and resolute leadership has successfully established a culture of high expectations. He is ably supported by senior leaders and a well-informed, dedicated governing body. There are emerging strengths in middle leadership but some members of this team are still developing the skill of using performance data to fine-tune practice and drive improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school's thorough monitoring procedures ensure it is based on secure evidence.

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

- Raise students' attainment further by:

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- sharing and building the skills of middle leaders so they are equally effective in monitoring the work of their teams and maintaining a sharp focus on improving outcomes for students
- ensuring all teachers are rigorous in using assessment to challenge students appropriately and consistently
- developing students' learning skills so that they gain independence and the confidence to apply, and contribute to, learning in different contexts.

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

**2**

Students join the school with attainment that is broadly average. In 2010, the percentage of students achieving five higher grade GCSEs, including English and mathematics, was broadly average. The school's reliable assessment information shows most students now making good progress, including those eligible for free school meals, the few from minority ethnic groups and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, students' attainment is rising with gathering momentum. The school is on track to achieve challenging targets in 2011 that will lift key performance indicators considerably.

Students display good attitudes to learning and enjoy most of their lessons, particularly when they are actively involved in tasks. In the majority of lessons observed by inspectors, students were achieving well. There are some good and outstanding teachers who are highly skilled in developing students as independent and self-motivated learners. For example, in one art lesson that was observed, students were being trained to use sophisticated success criteria to examine each other's portfolios of work and pinpoint how a higher grade could be attained. These teaching and learning skills have not yet been sufficiently shared. There are occasions when learning is too teacher-led with opportunities to increase participation and give students responsibility for learning missed.

Students say they feel very safe and extremely well cared for at school. They are polite, cooperative and friendly. Behaviour, both in lessons and around school, is good. Students understand how to lead healthy lifestyles. Many make sensible food choices and there is good participation in extra-curricular sporting opportunities. The range of academic and vocational courses available, excellent guidance and sound basic skills contribute well to students' future economic well-being.

Students understand and appreciate different faiths and cultures. They show high levels of support and respect for each other, working and socialising together harmoniously. Concern for others is also expressed in their fund-raising and voluntary work for local and international causes. Students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports the secure and close-knit relationships which are a hallmark of the school.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons students are fully absorbed in challenging work that develops their skills and understanding at a rapid pace. Assessment information is used effectively to plan interesting activities that are well matched to students' abilities and interests and to the demands of the curriculum. Consequently, students enjoy learning. They understand their work, know how to improve it and make good progress. Where teaching is less secure, lesson planning does not always draw sufficiently on available information about students' progress to prepare for and meet individual needs. The skills that drive students' progress in lessons, for example, well-chosen and directed questioning and precise feedback about the next learning step, are unrefined. Consequently, students' progress slows and there are instances where some fail to engage properly with tasks.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets students' needs, capabilities and interests well. The school provides a very good range of subjects, courses and wider learning experiences which fully meet statutory requirements. Well-established links with other providers increase choice and flexibility to combine academic, vocational courses and work-related opportunities. Students receive high quality guidance in making choices about courses and their subsequent career and work-related decisions.

Transition arrangements for students are thorough. Highly sensitive care for those students who are potentially vulnerable, and effective support for all, underpin students' strong sense of well-being and belonging.

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*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>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior leaders and governors work together cohesively with a productive balance of skills and expertise. Their ambition for the school is evident in a shared sense of purpose and a strong commitment to the success of every student.

Leaders set challenging targets for improvement for the school as a whole and for individual students. Very regular collection and analysis of assessment information ensure that the progress of individuals and groups of students is closely monitored. Underachievement is detected and tackled quickly with well-targeted and tailored interventions. Line management is effective in supporting staff, ensuring their accountability and relating their day-to-day work to school improvement priorities. Although there is some variation in students' performance across subjects, equality of opportunity is actively promoted. Tolerance and the celebration of diversity are central to the school's ethos.

Well-coordinated partnership working and good liaison with other agencies make an important contribution to provision for students. The school is outward facing, knows its context well and supports cohesion in the wider community successfully through, for example, the North Island Community Improvement Partnership that is currently chaired by the headteacher.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. The school has made appropriate checks on all adults who work with the students. Its single central record of such checks is well organised and maintained. Arrangements for financial management are robust and the school provides good value for money.

The governing body is supportive and knowledgeable. They are involved in shaping and evaluating improvement plans, actively seeking the views of parents, staff and students in the process. They hold the school to account for its performance, and fulfil their role as critical friends well.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

A very small minority of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires and this is a lower than average return rate when compared with other schools. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and expressed appreciation of the work of teachers and teaching assistants in providing for students' well-being and their academic development. A few raised concerns about communications with the school, bullying and students' behaviour. Inspectors found students' behaviour overall to be good in lessons and around the school. Students reported that incidents of bullying are relatively rare and dealt with effectively. The range of evidence examined by inspectors supported this view strongly. There was also extensive evidence of the school's efforts to keep parents and carers well informed about their children's progress.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Admiral Lord Nelson 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 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,003 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	37	61	48	14	11	4	3
The school keeps my child safe	50	39	73	57	0	0	4	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	45	64	50	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	34	70	55	11	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	46	36	73	57	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	31	75	59	8	6	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	26	79	62	12	9	2	2
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)	38	30	74	58	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	31	74	58	9	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	27	73	57	11	9	7	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	26	70	55	14	11	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	44	34	71	55	7	5	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	47	56	44	6	5	2	2

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



4 March 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Admiral Lord Nelson School, Portsmouth PO3 5XT**

Thank you for your warm welcome during our inspection of your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the excellent contribution you make to the school and wider community. We found that your school provides you with a good education overall. The care, guidance and support that you receive are outstanding. You told us that you feel extremely safe in school and valued as individuals.

Your attainment by the end of Year 11 is broadly average and rising. Most of you are now making good progress during your time in school. Teaching is good overall and the school provides you with a wide range of courses which meet your interests and needs very well. Your progress is monitored closely, and generally you know how well you are doing in your work. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff are ambitious for you and want each and every one of you to succeed.

We have asked the headteacher to ensure your attainment continues to improve by developing the skills of some middle leaders, making sure all teachers use assessment well to stretch you in lessons and increasing your ability to learn independently. You can help by being willing to take responsibility for your learning.

Thank you for contributing so well to the inspection. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline White

Her Majesty's Inspector

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