

Robert Pattinson School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120709
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358826
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Trevor Riddiough HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	1295
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Barbara Wells
Headteacher	Helen Renard
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
School address	Moor Lane North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 9AF
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 44 teachers in 44 lessons including four joint observations with members of the senior leadership team, and four tutor groups. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and other staff, groups of students, and members of the governing body. Joint meetings were conducted with senior staff from both partner schools regarding the joint sixth form. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of students' progress, performance data, students' work, whole-school and subject development plans, numerous policies, school documents and case studies. Completed questionnaires from 124 students, 227 parents and carers and 50 staff were received and analysed.

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

- The extent of the improvements predicted by the school in attainment and progress for the current Year 11 and in future.
- The extent that leaders, at all levels, have improved the provision and raised standards across all years, especially in mathematics.
- How well assessment is used to promote the progress that students make.
- The extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of students of all abilities both in the main school and in the sixth form.
- How well leaders at all levels have ensured rigour with evaluations to bring about improvements in the rates of progress that students are making in the sixth form.
- The impact of partnership working on the outcomes and provision in the sixth form.

Information about the school

Robert Pattinson School is a larger-than-average comprehensive school with a sixth form. It takes students from a wide geographical area including city, urban and rural locations. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/ or disabilities is below average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school population is largely White British and very few students come from minority ethnic heritages. Very few are at the early stages of learning English. The school is a specialist languages college and has received national recognition in a number of areas of its work including in its careers work and in and in establishing a healthy school. The school has Investors in People status. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was temporarily on personal leave but was present at the inspection.

The North Hykeham Joint Sixth Form is an arrangement between North Kesteven and the Robert Pattinson School. A sixth form committee includes representatives of the governing bodies from both schools. Separate inspection teams inspected both schools and their joint sixth form simultaneously.

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 and improving school. It is a harmonious community built on mutual respect where all students are valued. There is a strong concern and commitment for ensuring that each student is supported to achieve their best. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from very effective care, guidance and support. As a result, outcomes for students are good and improving. There are very helpful partnerships with the local community, schools and colleges which contribute further to the achievement of students. The extent to which students, especially those who may be most at risk, take action to improve aspects of their health is exemplary, for example the 'Go Girls' group is succeeding in promoting the confidence of girls who are keen to take action to improve their health. Students' attendance is above average, and those who are persistently absent due to long term illness or other external factors are supported effectively to return to school.

Students start at the school with average levels of attainment and they make good progress to reach above average attainment in the national tests and examinations in most subjects by the end of Year 11. However, this pattern of attainment is not replicated across all subjects. In the past, performance in mathematics and history has lagged behind the other subjects. Senior leaders have rightly identified the causes of this variability and steps have been taken to address this and it is expected that improvements will be seen in improved examination results in 2011. The school's own data and qualifications already secured through early entry, coupled with the inspectors' observations, support this view. Challenging targets are set and students' progress is carefully tracked; appropriate intervention strategies are put in place if they appear to be falling behind. The school's current data indicate that examination results are on track to rise in most subjects this year.

Achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory and improving. The school recognises that further improvement of sixth form outcomes are necessary and has identified this as a high priority area. As a result, action has recently been taken to enhance the teaching and to widen and to improve the curriculum.

Students have positive attitudes to learning and work hard. Students are proud of their school and they typically say, 'It is really like a family here and our teachers are really nice'. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around school, creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Relationships between staff and students are good and this enables students to feel secure and work positively with their teachers and each other. The majority of lessons are well structured and designed to cope with the sometimes long lesson times. Inspectors observed some lessons which were outstanding and inspirational. For example, in a music lesson the teacher inspired many students to try and experiment with different musical devices with striking impact on their final pieces of work. In the good lessons

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objectives are clear; students engage in a range of tasks which are challenging and build upon each other to ensure that learning takes place effectively. In these lessons, students are actively encouraged to learn independently of their teachers. However, in some lessons planning does not take into account the needs of all students in the class and some, particularly those of higher ability, do not make the progress of which they are capable. In the satisfactory lessons and in the sixth form generally, teachers do not always ensure that students learn independently. The quality of marking varies across subject areas and some students do not always get clear guidance on how to improve their work.

The headteacher and senior staff set a clear vision for the school based on securing good progress for all its students. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Plans are clear and well-focused on the school's priorities. There is an improving trend of achievement, especially in the subjects identified as requiring further development, for example in mathematics. The curriculum has developed to meet the students' needs. Senior and middle leaders monitor performance in their areas closely and take appropriate action to bring about improvement. However, the current arrangements for leading and managing the sixth form do not secure the coordination or strategic overview required to take it forward as joint provision with its partner school. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress of all students by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning meets the needs of and challenges the full ability range in the class
 - ensuring that marking in all subjects gives students clear guidance on what they need to do to improve
 - developing students to be independent learners across all subjects without reliance on their teachers.
- Improve retention rates, standards and rates of students' progress in the joint sixth form by:
 - reviewing the current leadership structure to better serve the needs of the joint sixth form
 - strengthening the joint monitoring and evaluation of students' performance
 - comparing outcomes against national expectations to drive priorities for improvement
 - strengthening the role of the joint sixth form governors' committee to monitor progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students enter the school with attainment that is broadly average. They progress well and, by the end of Year 11, attainment is above average in most subjects, with only slight variations year by year. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive well-targeted support which is tailored specifically to meet their needs and, as a result, they too make good progress. There are few differences in the achievement of different

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groups of students in the school; however, some students do not achieve the top GCSE grades that could be expected of them. There is also still some variation in the performance of subjects, notably in mathematics and history. However, in these cases there are arrangements in place to tackle these variations and the gaps are closing. In lessons, students concentrate very well and are encouraged and motivated by their teachers to give their best. Activities are generally well planned and students have regular opportunities to discuss and extend their learning. Consequently, they generally make good progress. The school's data show a clearly improving trend of attainment which is set to rise again in the coming year.

Students trust their teachers to resolve any problems which they report. Students interviewed during the inspection confirmed this, saying that, 'We feel safe and protected.' Students behave considerately towards each other and understand that they should reflect on putting things right. The importance of good attendance is promoted successfully and clear support strategies are in place to improve the small group of students with low attendance rates. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this is reflected in how they think and reflect about the feelings of those around them. Students are curious about the world around them and are involved in a good range of cultural activities through their religious education and other studies. Students have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy, endorsed by Healthy School status. They enjoy healthy food at lunchtime and learn about a healthy lifestyle in the 'Learning for Living' courses. They regularly participate in the wide range of sporting and other activities available. Students value their school community and willingly take on responsibility, for example form representatives meet regularly and work to support the school and outside charities. Robert Pattinson students have a strong presence in the local community through their involvement in the new North Hykeham Development Plan. Students are suitably prepared for the next stage in their education or progression into employment through a range of opportunities to develop work-related skills through effective guidance, endorsed by the Career Mark.

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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	1
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	2
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?

Teaching is characterised by effective planning for learning, supported by good subject knowledge and productive relationships. Teachers use a good range of activities to make learning interesting, which serves to engage students well. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations and inspire students with their enthusiasm for their subjects: students are often engrossed in their work. Teachers use skilful questioning to help students think things through and come up with creative ideas in their answers. In the small minority of lessons where teaching is no more than satisfactory, lessons are too teacher-led. This means that learning is constrained and students are denied the opportunity of establishing the wider skills of independent learning. Generally, lessons are organised well and teachers maintain a brisk pace. The majority of students are aware of their current performance and their target grades. Teachers give students helpful individual guidance in lessons on how to improve their work, but the quality and frequency of written feedback varies.

The curriculum has undergone considerable change over the last two years and now effectively meets the needs, interests and aspirations of all groups of students. There is a wide range of options in Key Stage 4, including three different learning pathways. These incorporate a range of academic and more practical vocational courses, as well as more personalised curriculum programmes that provide flexible learning opportunities for students who find it difficult to engage with their learning. The school is meeting specialist

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language school targets and there is rich provision, with many students studying two languages. There is some use of the specialism to improve teaching and learning in other curriculum areas, for example in leading on the use of technology in the classroom and in training other subjects in the development of quality assurance systems. Partnerships with local businesses are used to enhance the curriculum and learning for a small number of students. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities and good take-up, including physical education, expressive arts and languages-related activities involving trips and foreign exchanges, study support sessions, clubs for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as for those who are gifted and talented.

Care, guidance and support for students are strengthened by a culture where all students are included. This is endorsed by the students who say that they feel cared for. In discussion, students highlighted clear examples of where school support has helped them to turn themselves around, including moral support, timetable changes, anger management and transition from other schools. The tutor teams work closely with learning support staff to ensure that students with specific needs can be catered for. There is close work with other support staff, such as the school nurse, the parent support adviser and welfare officers as well as off-site multi-agency links. Support is closely matched to achieve the best possible student outcomes for all. Transition arrangements from primary school are thorough and valued by students. Older students receive effective guidance about subject choices, career opportunities and post-16 education pathways.

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior staff and governing body set high expectations and have brought about steadily improving achievement. Many changes have taken place regarding the structure of leadership, management systems and processes aimed at raising standards and there are positive signs that these having an impact. Staff are committed to the school's aims directed at securing good progress for all students. There is an effective programme of monitoring and evaluation carried out by senior and middle leaders. Suitable plans are put in place to remedy any shortcomings and these are rigorously checked through line management meetings. The rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning provides an accurate view of where strengths and weaknesses lie and effective strategies are in place to make any improvements needed. These strategies have been instrumental in increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in the school. Central to the school's success is the careful monitoring of students' progress using the recently implemented data tracking system and the flexibility of its responses to keep all students on track. The governing body has a strategic view of the school's development

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and is well organised, using the expertise of individual governors. They review the school's performance and understand what needs to improve. However, the strategic overview of performance in the joint sixth form is less strong and plans and systems are in place to remedy this in the future. Governors have taken a leading role in maintaining arrangements for the effective safeguarding of students and this is exemplified by the funding of a secure reception and entrance which is currently under construction. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and comprehensive and the parent forum covers aspects of safeguarding such as internet safety, self-harming and anti-bullying measures.

The school promotes equality well and addresses any discrimination effectively, raising awareness through assemblies and the 'Learning for Living' programme. The progress of all groups of students is carefully tracked to ensure that all make the progress that can be expected of them. As a result, there are currently no groups of students who are underperforming. The promotion of community cohesion is central to the school's ethos and this is reflected in the close and friendly school community. The school has a clear understanding of its context and this enables it to plan for a series of events to raise students' awareness of many cultures and communities that they would not normally experience.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The North Hykeham Joint Sixth Form is satisfactory and improving. Students enjoy excellent relationships with their teachers and value the good quality care and support they receive. Students act as positive role models for their younger peers offering support in lessons, working with neighbouring primary schools, and leading charity events. Students enter the sixth form with standards that are broadly average with fewer students than average at the higher levels of attainment. Students have not made the progress

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expected in recent years and the proportion that remains in the sixth form over two years has been below average. Standards have been too variable across courses. Leaders identified that the curriculum was not meeting the needs of students, and that some students embarked on courses that proved to be too challenging. Significant changes have now taken place and provision is good. The curriculum provides a good range of vocational and academic courses across the two schools, supported by a popular range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. The quality of guidance has also improved to ensure that students

- study appropriate courses. The full impact of the changes are yet to be seen but retention rates are improving and students are now making at least satisfactory progress.

Leadership and management arrangements are evolving but are not yet fully in place to serve the needs of the joint sixth form. Staff from both schools are working hard to implement quality assurance activities to reduce the variation in standards between subjects, and to monitor and evaluate students' progress more closely. This positive development is not sufficiently embedded across all subjects and courses. The joint sixth form governors' committee endorses this drive for improvement. The committee has had less involvement in monitoring the progress of students, or comparing students' outcomes with national expectations to support self-evaluation.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who completed questionnaires were generally positive about the school and their children's education. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspectors followed up these concerns: they judged that the school has effective policies in place with regard to behaviour. Procedures are followed consistently, contributing to the good behaviour in the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robert Pattinson 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 227 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1295 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	24	145	64	18	8	6	3
The school keeps my child safe	55	24	164	72	6	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	28	145	64	16	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	30	136	60	12	5	6	3
The teaching is good at this school	39	17	157	69	18	8	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	17	147	65	28	12	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	10	174	77	25	11	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)	45	20	141	62	14	6	10	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	23	144	63	19	8	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	19	130	57	34	15	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	12	143	63	22	10	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	20	149	66	14	6	7	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	30	135	59	15	7	7	3

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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">■ 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.



12 May 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Robert Pattinson School, Lincoln LN6 9AF

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. Your views were very helpful and we enjoyed our discussions with those of you we spoke to in lessons, in meetings and around the school. The school provides you with a good quality of education. You receive good care, guidance and support and are provided with a good curriculum that meets your needs well. We found that the efforts taken by your school to promote healthy lifestyles was exemplary and we were particularly impressed with the 'Go Girls' group in that respect. Your teachers work hard to support you and they monitor the progress that you make and take action to support you whenever it appears that you may not meet your academic targets. As a result, you generally make good progress and achieve well in nearly all your subjects. Your attendance and behaviour are both good.

The joint sixth form is satisfactory and improving; achievement at A' level is average. You enjoy your time there and work well with your teachers. Staff care for you well and make sure you are prepared for the next stage of your education. In order to improve your results further, we have asked your school to work more closely with North Kesteven School to ensure that you receive good teaching and make good progress all the time.

Your school has a strong leadership team which is committed to giving you best possible education. Like all good schools, it recognises that there is still more that can be done to improve further, and so we have identified some areas that need to improve. These are:

- ensure that lesson planning enables all of you in the class to make the best possible progress
- providing you with clear advice and guidance through the day-to-day marking of your work on to how to accelerate your progress
- helping you to learn independently of your teachers
- bringing about further improvements in the joint sixth form to raise the achievement of all students.

You all have a part to play and you can really help your school by ensuring that you do not settle for anything other than your best and that you follow up the comments and suggestions that your teachers make to help you to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Riddiough

Her Majesty's Inspector

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