

Ruislip High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133625
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	367438
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Gill Close

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	750
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Douglas Mills
Headteacher	John Goulborn
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

They observed 29 lessons taught by 29 teachers, and held meetings with students, staff and governors. Their observations of the school's work included tutorials, support sessions and extra-curricular activities. They looked at records of students' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning, self-evaluation, lesson monitoring documents, policies, minutes of governing body meetings, exclusion data and attendance figures. They also evaluated questionnaire responses from 110 parents and carers, 87 students and 74 staff.

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

- The progress of students in each year group, particularly the lower attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The features of teaching and of academic and pastoral support that contribute most to students' progress.
- The use of targets and assessment to inform specific guidance for students on how to improve, and to track and enhance the achievement of individuals and groups.
- The effectiveness with which leaders at all levels pinpoint areas for development and bring about successful outcomes and improvement.

Information about the school

Ruislip High School opened in September 2006 with just Year 7 students. It has grown each year and now has its first Year 11 students. In September 2011, it will admit its first sixth-form students. It is a smaller school than average, with a very local catchment area. The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, as is the percentage who speak a first language other than English. A very few students are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The main needs and/or disabilities are autistic spectrum disorder, dyslexia and speech, language and communication difficulties. Since 2008, the school has held specialist status in mathematics and computing.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Ruislip High is an outstanding school. Its exceptionally well personalised care ensures that students' development of personal qualities is excellent and their achievement is outstanding. Staff know all students extremely well, monitor their attainment very closely and provide customised support for anyone who is falling behind. This thorough tracking and intervention, coupled with outstanding teaching in lessons and support sessions, enables students to achieve outstandingly well. Students very much enjoy school, say that it feels like a big family and get on with each other exceptionally well. They feel very safe, generally behave extremely well and have high attendance.

The excellent teaching leads to students making at least good progress across year groups and subjects, and outstanding progress overall. Students find the majority of their lessons very interesting and enjoyable. Most teaching is good or better, and a substantial proportion is outstanding, but on occasions, teaching is satisfactory. In the latter cases, students spend too long listening passively, the high attainers are not challenged to think hard enough, and teachers do not monitor each student's progress systematically or involve students enough in judging how well they are doing. The outstanding curriculum is tailored closely to students' needs and continuously adapted. The excellent support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for students for whom English is an additional language, helps them to make progress that is at least as good as that of their peers.

The headteacher and senior leaders are very effective in inspiring all staff to share the vision of excellence, aspiration and love of learning. There is an unrelenting focus on enabling all students to fulfil their potential. Staff work together as a united team with very high morale and bring about improvement through extensive ongoing evaluation and targeted action, although this is not always recorded systematically. They use data carefully for individual monitoring and to ensure gaps between groups are narrowed, but leaders do not regularly receive analyses by group that provide them with a quick overview or national comparisons. Leaders at all levels observe teaching and are effective in improving it; the school has correctly identified the need for lesson evaluations to place a more consistent emphasis on students' progress. The accuracy of self-evaluation and the effectiveness of systems that have brought about outstanding outcomes provide the school with an excellent capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Be more consistent and systematic in:
 - challenging all students and monitoring everyone's progress during lessons
 - involving all students actively in their learning and in peer and self-assessment

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- focusing on the progress of individuals and groups when monitoring lessons
- using evaluation and data on the achievement and participation of groups of students.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students concentrate very well in lessons. They are determined to keep trying until they succeed and keenly take up the opportunities provided to help them if they are stuck, such as individual sessions before school. They participate eagerly when given interesting group activities and respect each other's contributions. Their behaviour is generally exemplary in lessons but, on some occasions where work does not involve them actively enough, a few students become inattentive. In lessons, lower attainers and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn as well as their peers, but occasionally the higher attainers are not given hard enough work to enable them to make better than satisfactory progress.

The school's data show that students are on track for substantially above average attainment overall and in most subjects, including mathematics, English and science. The data also indicate that, from their above average attainment on entry to the school, they are making more progress than average by the end of Year 11, particularly in mathematics and English. Records show that the current Year 11 also made progress above that typically expected during Key Stage 3, and that progress for the current Year 10 has improved since a slight dip last year. Observations of lessons and of students' work demonstrate that their progress is at least good across years and subjects, and excellent in some, so is outstanding overall. The indications are that the school's challenging targets will be exceeded.

Students are very proud of the school. They make an excellent contribution to the community, for example by helping each other to meet targets and working with primary school pupils. Through focus groups, they give their views on teaching each subject and influence decisions. Students say they feel very safe, and their parents and carers agree. The excellent relationships between staff and students give students confidence that any issues, such as bullying, are dealt with effectively. Students know very well how to stay healthy. The vast majority of them walk to school and many participate in the optional sporting activities. A high proportion of them eat a healthy school lunch. Nevertheless, the restricted amount of food remaining for the year group that eats last and the cleanliness of the toilets do not consistently promote a healthy lifestyle. Students are very aware of the social and emotional aspects of learning. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their strong sense of right and wrong, support for each other and respect for diversity. The school helps students to extend their aspirations. Students are well prepared for their futures by their high levels of attendance and punctuality and their confidence in applying their strong skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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 motivates and inspires students to work hard and do their best. Teachers set high expectations and use clear routines. They regularly spend time discussing with students the work they find difficult and providing additional support outside lesson time that makes a real difference to students' progress. In most lessons, teachers use excellent subject knowledge and detailed records of students' attainment to plan a variety of activities that challenge everyone. They tailor well their support and that of teaching assistants and use ICT creatively to interest students and deepen their understanding. They develop students' independence and engage them in thoughtful discussion and judgement of the quality of their own and others' work. In the few lessons that are merely satisfactory, students acquire knowledge and skills but are not engaged actively for long enough to develop their understanding, independence and ability to evaluate their performance against clearly explained criteria. Sometimes the work is too similar for the whole class so does not meet everyone's needs and teachers do not check how well all students are doing then adapt the lesson accordingly.

The curriculum is exceptionally well tailored and adapted to meet students' needs. Additional support in English and mathematics for those who need it contributes to the high levels of attainment in these subjects. There are rich cross-curricular tasks and carefully planned opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects. The range of qualifications offered enables students to experience success in the

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core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and all of them to study towards certificates in ICT and religious education. All students develop their skills for the future, such as in problem solving and communication, through working for the certificate of personal effectiveness. This builds very well on the excellent cultural studies course in Key Stage 3, which gives students a deep understanding of citizenship and moral values, as is reflected by a typical student's comment, 'it introduces you to the actual world and helps you to know what is wrong and what is right'. Through partnerships with colleges, a range of vocational courses are customised for vulnerable students. Staff constantly evaluate the match of curriculum to need and are introducing further vocational options for all. Students greatly enjoy the variety of enrichment activities, clubs and trips.

The pastoral system ensures that all students are known as individuals and cared for extremely well. Constant communication between the non-teaching form tutors and teachers is a key part of the consistent approach to applying rules and giving rewards that helps students overcome difficulties and develop responsibility. All staff regularly identify students for targeted academic or other support and pinpoint why, then work together to provide it immediately, coordinated by subject or year leaders. Academic tutors attached to each form meet with individuals to set termly targets and monitor progress on them. Students also make good use of the individual consultation slots that staff provide before school. Meticulous checking of attendance in each lesson and follow-up ensure high attendance. The excellent support for students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, involves close partnership with parents, carers and agencies, and enables them to play a full part in the school community and achieve success.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders are extremely effective in driving improvement and involving all staff in this process. Accountability is shared, with all teachers having targets to ensure students make strong progress and performance gaps are narrowed. All teachers participate in meetings to plan how to improve the progress of specific students who have fallen behind. Planning in each area of the school is consistently aligned to the same key priorities to improve teaching quality and the rigour of self-evaluation. Governors are influential in developing the ethos and strategic direction of the school as it continues to grow. They provide challenge and support to achieve this. They have close links with the community that enable them to act on views of parents and carers and they recognise the need for more systematic gathering of information.

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Inclusion and equality of opportunity are central to the school's ethos. Gaps between groups in performance are monitored and effectively narrowed. Students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported to participate in extra-curricular activities. Discrimination is challenged exceptionally well, for example through the cultural studies course, so incidents are rare. Exclusions are low, although the figures for groups are not routinely compared with national proportions. The school community is very cohesive as a result of the well-planned work in the curriculum and the pastoral system. This is informed by a careful analysis of the school's religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and evaluation of impact. The school works with a wide range of partners to broaden the curriculum and enhance students' well-being, and takes a leading role in promoting the specialist subjects in the locality. The school keeps in regular contact with parents and carers in many ways, and seeks and acts on their views. Arrangements for safeguarding students are excellent and permeate the school's work. Vetting of staff and visitors is exemplary, as are the procedures for child protection, including training. Thorough risk assessments are in place.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaire were happy with their children's experience at the school, and agreed that their children enjoyed school and were kept safe. They also agreed that the school met their children's particular needs, that the teaching was good and that they were informed about their children's progress. Most parents and carers agreed that their children were making enough progress, were well prepared for the future and were helped to have a healthy lifestyle. Most agreed that the school was led and managed effectively, that unacceptable behaviour was dealt with effectively and that their suggestions and concerns were taken account of. A few disagreed that the school helped them to support their children's

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learning. Inspectors found that the school provides a wide range of assistance, including information on the work students are going to learn, sessions on helping children with mathematics and English, and close liaison on supporting the needs of vulnerable students, although there is room for more.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ruislip High 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 750 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	45	52	47	4	4	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	61	55	44	40	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	48	52	47	3	3	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	55	37	34	9	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	56	51	45	41	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	38	51	46	15	14	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	24	74	67	10	9	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	35	58	53	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	39	59	54	3	3	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	45	48	44	8	7	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	30	63	57	7	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	48	44	50	45	7	6	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	62	35	32	5	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	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.



24 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Ruislip High school, Ruislip HA4 0BY

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school and for telling us about it. We were impressed with the excellent way you get on with each other and with your teachers; some of you told us that it felt like a big family.

We found that your school is outstanding. The staff know all of you thoroughly and look after you extremely well. They keep a close track on how you are getting on and give extra support whenever you need it. This helps you to make outstanding progress, and almost all of you to have high attendance and excellent behaviour. You, your parents and carers told us that you greatly enjoy coming to school and feel very safe. You work hard and are keen to do well.

Teaching is excellent. Most lessons are interesting and help you to learn very well. In a few other lessons, you do not make such good progress because you are not given:

- work that challenges you to think hard
- active involvement in group work, discussion or showing what you understand
- opportunities to assess how well you and others are progressing towards targets.

We have asked the school to make improvements so these areas are consistently good or better. You can help by thinking hard about your work and what you need to do to meet your targets.

The headteacher and the staff work together very well to make sure the school keeps improving.

I wish you success at school and in helping it continue to improve

Yours sincerely

Gill Close, Her Majesty's Inspector

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