

Reigate School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	125257
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	395669
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2012
Lead inspector	Christine Jones HMI

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Kulka
Headteacher	Susan Wardlow
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2007
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a total of 42 lessons taught by 42 teachers of which three were joint observations with a member of the senior team. In addition, inspectors made short visits to nine lessons where pupils were receiving extra support. Meetings were held with groups of students, two governors as well as school staff, including senior and middle managers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at key documentation provided by the school, including improvement plans, analyses of the attainment and progress of students currently in the school, records related to the behaviour and safety of students and 230 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents and carers.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It is a non-selective school serving the local area and is always heavily oversubscribed. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Most students are from White British backgrounds and the proportions of students from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are small. The overall proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below the national average. The school has exceeded the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards set by the government for attainment and progress.

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

Key findings

- Reigate is an outstanding school where students make exceptional progress to reach very high standards from average starting points. Achievement in English is outstanding with many more students than average reaching the highest grades. Achievement in mathematics, while not quite as high as in English, is also outstanding. Students, parents and carers have a positive view of the school and would recommend it to others.
- In 2011, students made outstanding progress overall, especially in English where most made at least expected progress and two thirds made exceptional progress. In mathematics almost three quarters of students made at least expected progress with over a third making exceptional progress. The school provides very good individual support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and these pupils also make excellent progress.
- Teaching is almost always good and much of it is outstanding. Students are excited by their learning and know exactly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Most teachers plan with precision to meet the needs of the individual students in their classes and provide highly individualised learning experiences. In a very few lessons this planning is not always as tightly focused on the individual as it could be.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Relationships within the school community are strong and this creates a positive atmosphere that promotes an excellent learning environment. Students have a mature approach to their education and work well together and with their teachers.
- Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning gives senior leadership an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in different curriculum areas. Performance management systems give good support to those few areas where outcomes relative to other higher achieving subjects could improve.
- Excellent leadership at all levels, including of the governing body, is strongly focused on the ethos of 'helping students realise their academic, social and personal potential'. Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and are relentless in their determination to continually improve achievement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all lessons are precisely planned to meet the needs of all students by sharing the excellent practice used by many teachers and departments with all staff.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students enter the school with standards that are overall in line with those found nationally and they make excellent progress to reach well above average standards at GCSE. In 2011 almost two thirds of Year 11 students gained five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics, with above average numbers gaining the higher A*/A grades. Information on students' performance and grades already gained shows that standards reached by current 2012 Year 11 students are expected to improve on those reached previously. In other year groups information provided by the school and inspection lesson observations indicate these high levels of performance are being maintained.

In many lessons seen during the inspection, students made excellent progress, especially in English and mathematics. This includes those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic groups as well as disabled students and those with special educational needs. No groups of students repeatedly underachieve in the school with many frequently performing at a higher level than that found nationally.

In the few subjects where standards do not reach the school's high expectations the gaps are being closed through a variety of effective intervention, development and support strategies. Parents and carers were happy with the progress their children make in the school. Inspection evidence showed that students make the most progress in lessons that are fast paced and demanding; students have to work hard to keep up with the teacher but they enjoy this challenge. The best learning was seen where teachers gave students every opportunity to think issues through for themselves and engage with a variety of interesting and stimulating activities. Students understood what they were going to learn and at the end of the lessons both the teacher and students were clear about the levels of success.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is outstanding overall. Parents and carers agreed that their children are well taught. Outstanding lessons are characterised by high expectations with a focus on learning that engages the students with no opportunities for them to lose interest. The best lessons seen during the inspection were sharply focused on learning, driven by clear, explicit and shared objectives. All pupils, including those

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with special educational needs, are fully involved and participate in the excellent range of learning activities planned to meet their individual needs. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are excellent with good humour and mutual respect evident. Social and moral development is promoted through well-structured group work and opportunities for pupils to discuss their own ideas. Learning is consolidated through rigorous curriculum planning that ensures continuity and creates strong links between individual lessons. Teachers take every opportunity in their planning to promote students' spiritual and cultural development. Planning in a very few lessons does not always cover the needs of pupils in the class with a range of different abilities.

Assessment is thoroughly embedded into everyday classroom practices with teachers regularly checking and assessing progress in learning as the lesson proceeds. Evidence gathered from a review of students' work across a range of subjects showed that their work is marked frequently and regularly with quality feedback given on standards and how to improve. Students know their targets and what they have to do to reach them.

The school places a strong emphasis on developing students' basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. In particular students are encouraged to read in a variety of ways, for example, where they read aloud and to each other in lessons. The learning resource centre makes a valuable contribution to developing study and reading skills. For example, a class of younger students listened with rapt attention and obvious enjoyment to an exciting story read to them by the librarian.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

There is a calm and friendly atmosphere in the school and students are confident and happy both around the school and in lessons. They get on well with each other and with their teachers. Students are certain that they feel very safe in school and that any issues they might have are dealt with quickly. The inspection found little evidence to support the concerns about behaviour in lessons raised by a small minority of parents and carers. In their responses to questionnaires and interviews students indicated that poor behaviour in lessons was not a problem and did not disrupt their learning. Students enjoy coming to school as shown by their above average attendance and their punctual arrival to school and lessons. Exclusions are very rare and the school works hard to support successfully those students who move to Reigate from other schools where they may have had problems. Incidents of bullying are unusual and students say it is not a problem in the school. Students are confident that where bullying does occur it is dealt with promptly by staff. Students are aware of the different forms bullying may take, such as cyber bullying, and understand how this may affect them. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and what might constitute an unsafe situation. Students know what is expected of them and understand that the code of behaviour is essential for a secure school environment.

Vulnerable pupils are well supported by the school. The learning support team makes

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an outstanding contribution to supporting those pupils identified as needing extra help with their work including developing their social skills. The setting up of an inclusion unit is a significant benefit to the very few students who occasionally need time out of lessons and the appointment of a specialist inclusion manager has resulted in fewer students referred temporarily to the unit.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, very effective senior and middle management teams and governors are united in their commitment to helping all students in their care achieve their best. Students' performance and the work of the school are monitored through robust systems that allow for key priorities and improvement targets to be set that are ambitious and challenging but realistic. This process is underpinned by an approach to accountability and performance management that is not afraid to challenge mediocrity but also to support through effective professional development opportunities.

No form of discrimination is tolerated and equality of opportunity is promoted very successfully. This is illustrated by the excellent progress made by vulnerable students and disabled students and those with special educational needs. As part of the high quality care for the students, robust procedures are in place to ensure their safety and all current safeguarding requirements are met. Staff have been suitably trained in child protection procedures and the school encourages a sensible attitude among students to keep themselves safe.

Governors make an exceptional contribution to the school. They have a clear and concise view of the school and its role in the local community. They provide a significant level of professional challenge to the senior team and others that will not allow any complacency to creep into the work of the school. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school leadership and indicate that communications are usually good.

The curriculum provides highly personalised learning pathways especially for older students. This allows for a mix of both academic and vocational options to suit individual needs. Students' individual timetables are closely managed to ensure the best use of time. Very good relationships with local colleges promote continuity of learning experiences for the students when they leave Reigate School. An impressive and very wide enrichment programme offers considerable opportunities for students outside of lessons. This extends to some extra GCSE classes, for example astronomy, environmental science and media studies, which are well attended.

The school is determined that all students will achieve their full potential and this drive, together with a past record of continuous improvement, maintains the school's strong and secure capacity for further improvement.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

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

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 July 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Reigate School, Reigate RH2 7NT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and being in your lessons. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- Reigate is an outstanding school.
- Your achievement is excellent; you make outstanding progress and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 11, especially in English and mathematics.
- You tell us you feel very safe in school and learn a lot in your lessons.
- You come to school regularly and are on time to your lessons.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school and are keen to be involved in the wide range of activities the school organises for you.
- The excellent curriculum helps you with this as you have an excellent choice of courses in Years 10 and 11.
- Many of your teachers deliver outstanding lessons that keep you interested and help you to learn successfully. Very occasionally a few lessons do not meet the different needs of all students in the class.
- Teachers mark and assess your work very well and give you lots of valuable feedback on the standards you are reaching and how to improve.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to make sure you achieve the best you can.

We have asked the school to make sure all teachers plan lessons to meet all your needs. You can help by listening to their advice and improving your work.

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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