

Isleworth and Syon School for Boys

Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, London, TW7 5JL

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, have secured improvements in the quality of teaching, so that it is consistently good. As a result, outcomes are improving and achievement is good.
- Students' attitudes towards learning and behaviour are outstanding, and their behaviour is often exemplary. This contributes strongly to a calm and safe environment which inspires a love for learning.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted through the many sporting and cultural activities on offer.
- The sixth form is good, and students benefit from consortium arrangements with other secondary schools. This enables them to choose from a wide range of courses which are well matched to their needs. Consequently, many make exceptional progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to help students, particularly those of average ability, to make rapid progress at Key Stage 3.
- There are too few opportunities for students to practise and develop their reading, writing and problem-solving skills in different subjects at Key Stage 3.
- Students are not always given enough guidance on how to improve their work. There are too few opportunities for them to correct their work to show they have understood.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 42 lessons or part-lessons. Many lesson observations were shared with senior leaders. Short visits were made to observe the quality of teaching and the engagement of students.
- Work in students' books in Key Stage 3 was analysed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing and improvement plan, evaluations of the school by outside consultants, minutes of the governing body and its different committees, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to students about reading, met with different groups of students, and interviewed a sample of staff. They also spoke to members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents and carers were sought through the school's surveys. Inspectors considered the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered written comments from 54 staff.

Inspection team

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Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school. It converted to an academy on 1 March 2012. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good. The predecessor school was awarded sports college specialist status in 2003.
- The majority of students are from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest ethnic group are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This includes students in the care of the local authority and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school enters students early for GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and French. A small number of upper school students study vocational qualifications at West Thames College and the University of West London, ensuring that they leave school with recognised qualifications.
- Sixth form students are taught within a consortium of schools which include Brentford School for Girls, Feltham Community College, The Green School for Girls, and Kingsley Academy.
- Since September 2012, there have been several changes to the middle leadership team, and the school has appointed four Teach First graduates and one newly qualified teacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in English and mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 3, so that students, including those of average ability, make outstanding progress by:
 - increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching
 - improving the use of literacy in subjects other than English, so that students are given more opportunities to develop their writing skills and use subject-specific language in different contexts
 - increasing the amount of opportunities for practical learning which encourages students to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and undertake investigations
 - making sure that marking consistently provides students with sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve their work, and that time is given to students to consolidate or improve their new skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the school, students have average ability in most subjects. However, many have reading ages below those typically found at this age. Many make rapid progress in their reading skills as a result of well-targeted interventions, funded through the catch-up programme. The newly refurbished library provides an excellent learning environment to support these needs, and students make full use of it.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 in English dipped in 2012. However, school information confirms that students are now making good progress, particularly at Key Stage 4, and attainment in all key measures is set to improve considerably this year. This was confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of work.
- Although reading is taught well across the school, particularly for those students falling behind, opportunities for students to develop their reading, writing and communication skills across different subjects are more limited. This is especially so at Key Stage 3.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. Careful attention is given to providing work which matches their needs, and good support from well-trained assistants ensures that they are kept on track.
- Students funded through the pupil premium make good progress. In 2012, they performed only a third of a grade below their classmates in English, and about a grade below in mathematics. These gaps are now rapidly closing. They make the most of small-group work and one-to-one tuition.
- White British students achieve well at all levels, as do students who speak English as an additional language. In addition, students who take examinations early benefit as their performance improves, and more-able students are then able to do additional examinations.
- Students entered for examinations early achieve well, and this allows more-able students to begin advanced examinations earlier.
- The small numbers of students who are educated at the local college are given good support, so make good progress in the vocational subjects studied.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress and excel in some subjects such as physics and history. This comes as a result of high-quality teaching and good leadership, so that retention rates (the proportion of students completing courses that they started) are improving, and courses are well matched to their needs. For example, students studying A-level history made good progress in their learning about the federal government in the United States due to their positive attitudes, and made effective use of opportunities to check and improve each other's work.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good, and often outstanding, especially in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Learning proceeds at a quick pace and students enjoy the high challenge of working towards examination requirements. Year 11 students, for example, made rapid progress in revising how to measure mass in a science class, following an effective demonstration and well-targeted questioning. As the work was well matched to the students' needs, all groups, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, achieved highly.
- Students in the sixth form show effective skills in independent learning. For example, students studying A-level physics made rapid progress in their learning about nuclear energy through expert questioning by the teacher. By taking on different roles in group discussions, they were helped to identify gaps in their learning.
- Year 11 students made rapid gains in their learning during a mathematics revision lesson. They were encouraged to work on solving problems, and effective explanations helped them move quickly on in their understanding. Opportunities to investigate and apply these sorts of skills are

less frequent in Key Stage 3.

- Students in Year 8 made good progress in using different forms of literary device when studying a poem by Ted Hughes in an English lesson. Lively and engaging questioning and high expectations of language ensured a quick pace to the lesson.
- Marking and feedback are often thorough, especially when linked to the expectations of examinations. However, at Key Stage 3, it is inconsistent, as students are not always provided with sufficient guidance to help them understand what they need to do next. Opportunities for students to respond to this guidance are too infrequent.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students have very positive attitudes towards the school, and are fully engaged in learning, especially when the teaching provides challenge. They have responded well to the school's 'no excuses' approach and show exceptionally mature behaviour around the school.
- The school is orderly and calm. Students show considerable respect and care towards each other. They mix well across different social and ethnic groups, and provide a warm welcome to female students from neighbouring schools. They show a sensitive awareness of each other's differences.
- Relationships with staff are particularly strong. As one student said, 'I feel that Isleworth and Syon is a good school because it has my best interest at heart and it provides me with all the support I need to achieve to the best of my ability.'
- Students whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well cared for. Effective partnerships are in place with outside agencies which ensure that their needs are expertly met. Students say they feel safe, and understand well how to deal with risks they might face. They say that bullying is rare, and their parents and carers agree.
- The school is a welcoming community. There is no place for any discrimination, and the fact that all students achieve well reflects the school's firm commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Students enjoy coming to school, and show a great deal of pride in their work. They respond very positively to the system of rewards which sees older students wearing special coloured ties and badges. This is reflected in the above-average and improving attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have successfully built on the long traditions of boys' education since the school became an academy. Purposeful leadership and effective partnerships have resulted in improvements in many areas, including the behaviour and safety of the students. For example, Challenge Partnership visits have helped the school's checks on how well it is doing to be robust and accurate.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the start of the academic year. Subject leaders, including those new to their roles, play a vital part in checking regularly on teaching, and providing guidance on what needs to improve. They are also role models for best practice in teaching. Training is well matched to needs, with many staff undertaking further qualifications.
- Regular checks on learning and on the performance of staff have made sure that the school has an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, concerted action has been put in place to ensure that examination results in English improve following the dip in 2012. The promotion of literacy in other subjects, however, is still at an early stage and is not yet consistent, especially at Key Stage 3.
- Students benefit from the exceptional provision for sports through the school's specialist status. The many opportunities which meet a wide range of needs help to build confidence and leadership skills. Together with contributions from other subject areas such as the performing arts, the school promotes the students' highly impressive spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The views of parents and carers are sought at regular intervals. Very few express any concerns.
- The school works well in partnership with other schools in Hounslow and has a productive relationship with the local authority. Independent consultants and other partners help the school test its view of how well it is doing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body use their experience and knowledge of the school well, and have a good understanding of how different subject areas perform in relation to the rest of the school and with national comparisons. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, as illustrated by the strong support given to the action taken to address the dip in performance in the English GCSE in 2012. Governors check whether the budget, including additional funding, is used well to ensure that students make the progress they should. They understand that the funding of additional staff has reduced class sizes and enabled more effective one-to-one tuition. They have supported the careful checking of staff performance so that rewards reflect outstanding practice, and regular training has helped them keep abreast of recent changes such as in the Ofsted framework and safeguarding. This ensures that statutory requirements are met, including those relating to safeguarding, and child-protection procedures are exemplary.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137940
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	412859

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,043
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Vanessa Smith
Headteacher	Euan Ferguson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8568 5791
Fax number	020 8568 1939
Email address	school@isleworthsyon.org

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