

Ringwood School - A National Teaching Academy

Parsonage Barn Lane, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 1SE

Inspection dates 10–11 July 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.

- Students' GCSE attainment has been above national averages for the last three years. Their achievement and progress is now better than before.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the school. They talk positively about their school, are polite and welcoming and take considerable responsibility in school life.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Many teachers establish a positive learning atmosphere, challenging students to do their best.
- The headteacher and senior team take an effective lead in seeking improvement. Rigorous checks on teaching maintain and improve the quality of classroom practice.
- The sixth form is outstanding, as students achieve highly and are consistently challenged to improve their learning and understanding.
- The range of subjects that students follow is very well matched to their individual needs.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding, and the aspects of outstanding teaching that exist in the school are not routinely shared with all staff by leaders.
- Leaders, managers and governors make insufficient use of information available to ensure that students' progress is consistent throughout the year.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent, and too few opportunities are provided for students to make as much progress as possible by responding to the advice given.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 43 lessons taught by 43 teachers. Ten of these observations were made jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders of the school. A brief learning walk was undertaken. Inspectors did not observe teaching in Years 11 and 13 as students had completed their GCSE and A level examinations by the time of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, staff, including senior and middle leaders, and groups of students. Other informal discussions with students and teachers were also held.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed a variety of school documents, including the school’s evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and development plans, behaviour records, safeguarding records, governing body documents, and documents relating to the management of teachers’ performance.
- Inspectors took account of 75 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the questionnaires completed for the inspection by 46 staff.

Inspection team

Hugh Betterton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mary Hoather	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Jones	Additional Inspector
Duncan Millard	Additional Inspector
Jason Wye	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well below national averages.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for particular groups, which in this school applies to students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the few looked after by the local authority) is low.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Ringwood School converted to become an Academy in April 2011. When its predecessor school, Ringwood, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The headteacher is a National Leader of Education (NLE) and the school is a National Teaching Academy (NTA), providing support to other schools.
- A very small number of students are educated part-time at a range of alternative provision providers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to accelerate the progress of students by:
 - improving lesson planning to place greater emphasis on the learning and progress expected by students
 - challenging all students to improve learning by further developing their thinking skills
 - spreading the highly effective practice evident in some subjects, especially mathematics, to all subjects
 - ensuring that marking consistently and routinely informs students of what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring greater cohesion in the overall use of data by middle leaders to inform students' progress throughout the school year on a routine basis.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school with above average levels of attainment. They maintain or exceed this so that when they reach the end of Year 11, the proportion of students who gain five or more GCSE grades at A* to C, including English and mathematics, is above average. The school's information, based on examination modules already taken and accurate assessments of current performance, shows that students are on track to achieve higher results in 2013.
- Some variation in performance of subjects at GCSE was apparent in 2012, but in mathematics it was much better than that recorded nationally, maintaining the historic high levels. Groups that underachieved in 2012, particularly those eligible for the pupil premium funding, are on track to do significantly better in 2013. Differences in progress between boys and girls are narrowing well.
- The proportion of students now making or exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics compares well to national averages, and is particularly high in mathematics. In lessons observed during the inspection, students' achievement was good, confirming the school's own information.
- Students make very good progress in the school's well-established sixth form, with many of them exceeding challenging targets in 2012. By the end of the sixth form, results are above national averages for most subjects. Accurate assessments of students' current achievements show they are on track to achieve even better results in 2013.
- The school supports students eligible for pupil premium funding well. Extra staffing, small-group work and additional teaching resources are helping students to overcome the difficulties they face in their learning. In particular, well-targeted funding ensures Year 7 students with low reading ages are making rapid progress towards reaching better reading levels. The one GCSE grade gap in English and mathematics attainment between these students and their classmates last year is now quickly closing.
- Use of early entry GCSE mathematics has been very effective in improving attainment. These students' self-esteem is raised and motivates them to strive to achieve high grades at AS level as they all continue their study of mathematics in Year 11.
- Well-targeted additional support, challenge and encouragement, often by well-trained teaching assistants, ensure that disabled students and those with special educational needs, students for whom English is an additional language, as well as those from minority ethnic heritages, make similar progress to their peers. The very few students who attend courses off-site also make good progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most teaching is good, with a growing proportion that is outstanding. Teaching still requires improvement in a few cases.
- In the most effective teaching, teachers demonstrate consistently high expectations for learning and behaviour. Their skilled questioning enables students to develop their thoughts and ideas. Where learning proceeds at a quick pace, students are actively involved in tasks, learn together in groups and help one another. This creates a highly positive climate that encourages students to succeed. In an outstanding Year 10 history lesson, challenging questioning and effective summary strategies meant students understood in detail how the Treaty of Versailles affected each country.
- In many lessons, teachers plan varied activities that cater for the full range of students' learning needs and interests. Teachers provide high-quality feedback to students verbally but written feedback, in the form of marking, is more variable. In mathematics, art and humanities teachers' comments show students what they need to do to improve their work. Students value this kind of feedback, particularly when they can reflect and respond to the comments, but this

practice is not consistent across the school.

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement. Sometimes teachers provide too much direction so students have limited opportunities to work by themselves. In other cases, students make less progress because the teaching is not well enough planned to make clear what students should learn next.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Teachers ensure that students understand key subject ideas in the level of depth that will enable them to achieve the higher grades. Consequently, sixth formers are making excellent progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students' movement around the school and behaviour in lessons are calm, considerate and courteous at all times. Student leaders ensure that the many visitors to the school are always offered a warm welcome.
- Pastoral staff work well with students or families facing difficulties. Consequently, students arrive punctually to school. Attendance is above national averages and exclusion rates are very low.
- The Student Voice process successfully encourages students to improve their lives in school. Student leadership is very effective, with a well-targeted buddy system encouraging many to participate. Students in each year group choose a charity to support and arrange their own fund-raising activities; for instance, they represent the school on the Town Council and get involved in the design and development of garden areas across the site. Work on sustainability has received national recognition through Ambassador School Status.
- High levels of trust are evident in students managing their own behaviour, especially as older students are allowed off site at lunchtime, effectively supervised. Parents are very positive about behaviour in the school, strongly agreeing that their children are happy and enjoy school.
- The behaviour and safety of the few students attending off-site provision are also outstanding. Students are fully aware of how to keep safe, for example when using the internet and social networking sites.
- Students say that bullying is extremely rare. They understand fully what to do if they are exposed to cyber bullying, gender bullying, or homophobic bullying. Any discrimination is not tolerated.
- Sixth-form students receive high quality information, support and guidance. They relish their role in contributing to school life, often overseeing a wide range of events, planning support and activities for younger students.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's skill and expertise enthuse other senior leaders to have high expectations. Their shared determination is for all students to achieve the highest standards in learning and personal development possible. The overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in high regard.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate and detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Improving students' progress was identified as needing improvement; this is now monitored rigorously by senior leaders, and is already having a positive impact in accelerating students' progress. However, the sharing of the most effective practice across the school is not routinely established.
- Middle leaders have substantial responsibility for tracking progress, analysing and planning interventions and checking on the quality of work in their departments, but the most effective use of short-term progress information is not consistently established in all subject areas.
- All teachers know that they are accountable for the progress their students make. The system for the management of teachers' performance is demanding and effective in ensuring that

standards rise. Pay progression is linked clearly to successful outcomes.

- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and the school has very rigorous procedures to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities.
- The headteacher's leadership skills have been recognised through the school's status as a National Teaching Academy. Accordingly the school offers valuable support and training to other schools to help them improve.
- Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for the future. The curriculum is very well matched to students' needs. At Key Stage 4, they have the opportunity to undertake vocational courses as well as a challenging range of academic subjects. Additionally, the school has established many partnerships to help students to prepare for the world of work and further education, such as work experience, practising interview techniques with local companies and visiting universities.
- Leadership of the sixth form is outstanding. The high ambition evident for all sixth form students to achieve their best is exemplified by a wide and varied curriculum tailored annually to students' choice. Lessons are robustly monitored, with development plans under continuous detailed scrutiny.
- The school promotes the students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development very effectively. An outstanding range of opportunities to develop these aspects, such as a broad range of activities in all subject areas, including visiting speakers, is very well established. Links and exchange trips with several countries enhance students' cultural awareness. An excellent Eco Code actively involves students in sustainability throughout their time at school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed of the school's policies. They have a growing understanding of how decisions are taken about staff's performance management, the quality of teaching and salary progression. As a result of their training, governors understand why a dip in students' progress happened last year, so they now challenge the school more effectively. The governing body understands the importance of embedding learning and progress in all lessons across the school. Governors have a growing awareness of how the pupil premium is spent, and how this leads to the gap in achievement reducing between eligible students and their peers. The governors oversee the management of finance and resources well and ensure that the salary progression of staff is justified.

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	136657
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	411781

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
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	1624
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Macario
Headteacher	Miss Chris Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2008
Telephone number	01425 475000
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