

The John Roan School

Maze Hill, Blackheath, London, SE3 7UD

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, together with senior leaders and the governing body, has a clear and ambitious vision of continuous improvement for the school. This has been successful in raising standards of teaching and students' achievement, and is shared by staff and students alike.
- Standards of teaching have improved and most is at least good, with some that is outstanding.
- Achievement is good across the school at all key stages. Students do well in their examinations and the number achieving five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, is now above average.
- All groups of students achieve well and gaps in attainment are closing rapidly due to the school's determination to ensure no student gets left behind and everyone makes the best possible progress.
- Students' behaviour is good. Students are proud of the school and say they feel happy and safe in a caring, community environment, where staff and students respect one another.
- The board of governors is knowledgeable and effective. It has an excellent oversight of the school's work and understands precisely what the school needs to do to improve further.
- The school has a very effective curriculum which is designed to meet the needs of students of all abilities and to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is very good.
- The increasingly popular sixth form is good. Teaching is improving and students receive excellent support and guidance which enable them to achieve well from their starting points.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always plan lessons that meet the needs of the students who learn most quickly and, as a result, they do not always make as rapid progress as they could.
- Students in the sixth form do not always have the confidence to question their own learning and reflect on how they themselves can contribute to improving the progress they make.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 41 part-lessons, a number of which were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the school’s work, several groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation including school policies, data on standards and progress, safeguarding and lesson observations, improvement plans, anonymised performance management records and minutes of governors’ meetings.
- Inspectors also discussed lessons they had seen with senior leaders and looked at a range of students’ work in lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 68 parents’ responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View questionnaire and questionnaires completed by 60 members of staff.

Inspection team

Heather Leatt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Roger Garrett	Additional Inspector
Thomas Gibson	Additional Inspector
Michael Elson	Additional Inspector
Clifford Walker	Additional Inspector
Genevieve Usher	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The John Roan School is a larger-than-average-sized 11 to 18 mixed comprehensive school, with specialisms in science and mathematics. It is undergoing a major rebuilding programme which will be finished next year.
- There are more boys than girls on roll.
- A higher-than-average proportion of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also high.
- A large proportion of students is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for specific groups including looked after children, students known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There are 34 students eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- A very small number of Key Stage 4 students receive part of their education off site through various providers, including Wize-Up Independent School, Flower Skills and Training, Full Circle, as well as Pulse and Water Training.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of students who learn most quickly even further by ensuring that:
 - all teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of this group of students and challenge them to make the very best progress they can.
- Ensure that all students in the sixth form progress well and achieve highly by:
 - teaching them how to both reflect on, and question, their own learning and understanding effectively, and teachers planning lessons that will help them to progress more rapidly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of students join the school with attainment in English and mathematics that is significantly below the national average and go on to achieve very well across all subjects. As a result, by the end of Year 11, attainment is above average.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has risen over a number of years and in 2013, from the school's own provisional data, was above previous national averages for the first time. This is due to the school's relentless focus on improving teaching and learning, coupled with close tracking and monitoring of students' progress.
- Students in the sixth form receive excellent advice regarding which courses will be best suited to them and the school has broadened its curriculum to better meet their needs. Achievement in the sixth form is good as a result, although students would do even better if they were more able to reflect on, and question, their own learning.
- The attainment and progress of students who are supported by the pupil premium are improving rapidly and are at least good, including progress in English and mathematics. One-to-one tuition and small group work to raise standards in literacy and numeracy have been very effective. In 2012, the gap between these students and those who do not receive the pupil premium narrowed in both English and mathematics to approximately one GCSE grade. In 2013, achievement rose for all groups, including for those in receipt of the pupil premium, who are now around three quarters of a GCSE grade behind their classmates.
- Students supported by the Year 7 catch-up premium are also achieving well. The money has been spent on enabling students to make rapid progress in literacy and numeracy, with data showing that the vast majority have made significant progress since the start of the academic year in English and mathematics.
- The progress made by other groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, and the large number who speaks English as an additional language, is at least good at all key stages.
- The school entered a small number of students early for mathematics in the winter of 2012. This was done to support good achievement and those that were successful went on to study statistics or AS-level mathematics. No one was entered early in 2013, however.
- The progress of the very small number of students attending a range of courses off site is tracked and monitored carefully. As a result, this group also achieves very well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most of the teaching across all key stages, including in the sixth form, is rarely less than good and some is outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations of their students, supporting them to achieve and progress well. As one Year 9 student said, 'I would recommend this school because the teachers challenge you to limits you didn't know you had.'
- Students are enthusiastic learners and respond well to their teachers. Strong relationships are a notable feature throughout the school and make a significant contribution to the learning and progress of students, who are keen to do their best and work hard.
- In the best lessons, teachers make good use of a range of information about the students, including data about their starting points and information on their current progress. They plan and structure lessons very effectively to meet the needs of students of all abilities. In some lessons, however, students that learn most quickly are not always given work that will stretch them to make the very best progress they can.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers make use of good direct questioning, together with their passion for their subject, to support and challenge students to make exceptional progress. For example, in one Year 11 history class, students worked with genuine interest and enthusiasm on

the topic of industry during the two world wars and had a spirited discussion about the role of women in industry. There was a clear sense of wonder in the class when students realised the dangerous nature of some of the factory work undertaken by women at the time.

- Teachers in all subjects are aware of the need to support and improve students' literacy skills. The well-developed literacy policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it has maximum impact on students' progress. Teachers use a range of strategies to support students' needs and help students to develop sound literacy skills that enable them to be successful across the curriculum.
- Teaching in both English and mathematics is at least good. Careful marking and assessment of work is a strong feature in most subjects, particularly in English where it is exemplary. Teachers provide feedback to students that pinpoints exactly what they need to do to improve their work and expect them to respond to the comments made, enabling them to make good progress as a result.
- Teachers work very well with teaching assistants to provide extra help and support to those students who require it. The progress of these students is regularly checked and monitored so that they receive extra assistance when it is needed. Consequently, they make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in a range of subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are polite and respectful and behave well around the school's three different sites. The major building works which have been underway for more than a year present particular challenges which the students cope with extremely effectively. They behave in an exemplary fashion when moving from site to site and their good behaviour is remarked upon and appreciated by the local community.
- Behaviour in the vast majority of lessons is also very good. Students cooperate well with staff and have positive attitudes to learning. In the very small number of lessons where teaching is not strong, students sometimes lose a little focus on their learning.
- Students at all key stages say they feel safe and happy. They are highly complimentary about the care that they receive from staff and are justifiably proud of the culture of mutual respect that is at the heart of the school community.
- They are aware of all forms of bullying, including homophobic, racist and cyber bullying, but say that such incidents are very rare and that the school deals with them very effectively should they occur.
- Students appreciate the advice that teachers give them about how to stay safe. A wide range of issues, such as using the internet and mobile technology safely and the dangers and adverse effects of drugs and alcohol abuse, is covered in tutor times, through assemblies and also the use of outside speakers. Students say they find the information they are given very helpful.
- Attendance remains higher than the national average and the school has worked very hard to reduce exclusion rates, which have fallen rapidly over the last year.
- Parents and staff overwhelmingly agree that students' behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has been uncompromising in driving up standards and challenging underachievement in the school over the last few years. Together with his senior leaders, who share his vision of excellence for all, he has focused relentlessly on improving teaching and learning with notable success. As a result, performance at GCSE is now ahead of the previous national average for the first time in the school's history and staff morale is high.
- With the support of the governors, the headteacher and senior leaders are successfully overseeing an ambitious building programme that will see a significant and much needed increase in space and facilities for the school and will be of considerable benefit to the students. It is greatly to its credit that the school has continued to improve and thrive, despite the challenges that managing students on three separate sites spread across Greenwich have

presented.

- The school's evaluation of its own work is accurate. All leaders and managers fully understand its strengths and weaknesses and what it needs to do to improve. They work with determination and vigour to ensure that rigorous and demanding performance targets are met.
- There is an effective, personalised professional development programme in place, which teachers appreciate. This is linked to robust performance management, which ensures that staff are held fully to account for the progress of all the students they teach.
- The school has a successful curriculum, both in the main school and in the sixth form, which meets the needs of all students very well. There is an impressive range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities available to support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the school has forged a partnership with the Royal Observatory and other local schools to deliver a GCSE in astronomy, which is popular.
- Respect and equality of opportunity for all students lie at the heart of the school, which is a friendly and cohesive community. Excellent relationships are maintained across all key stages and discrimination is not tolerated. The school is keenly aware of the need to tackle extremism and takes its duties in this area very seriously and is committed to broadening students' horizons. For example, it has links with an all girls' school in Egypt and invited Anne Frank's step sister to visit the school and speak to students about her experience in the Auschwitz concentration camp.
- The school uses its pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding effectively in a variety of ways to raise the attainment of these students. As a result, their progress and achievement are improving and the gaps are narrowing at both key stages. This demonstrates the school's successful drive to promote equality of opportunity.
- The local authority has provided substantial support and guidance to the school over the past few years, to help it bring about necessary improvements. However, it now believes that the school is in a position of strength to move forwards under its own leadership, considering it to have excellent capacity to improve.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are thorough, including for those students who receive part of their education off site, and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is strong. The governors have considerable expertise and are able to challenge the school effectively to ensure it improves further. They hold the headteacher, senior and middle leaders fully to account for all aspects of the school's performance and are knowledgeable about its strengths and about where improvement is needed, for example in the quality of teaching. They regularly review the school's data compared to the national picture and have received training recently in RAISEonline analysis.
 - The governors are acutely aware of the pressures that leaders and teachers are under as a result of the major building programme that is underway and have provided considerable, expert support to the headteacher and senior leaders throughout, to help them manage the process as smoothly as possible.
 - Governors are aware of the way in which the performance management policy is implemented and consider the targets that are now set for teachers to progress up the pay scale to be rigorous so teachers who teach well are rewarded for their performance. Governors are aware of where underperformance has been tackled in the past. They monitor the effectiveness and impact of all spending, including pupil premium spending, closely and have set narrowing the gap as one of the headteacher's performance management targets. There is an ongoing training programme in place to meet the governing body's needs and keep their knowledge and understanding up to date.

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	100192
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	425563
Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
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	1,157
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patrick Cooper
Headteacher	Des Malone
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2011
Telephone number	0208 516 7555
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