

# Rydens Enterprise School and Sixth Form College

Hersham Road, Hersham, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 5PY

**Inspection dates** 25–26 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' behaviour around school, at breaks and in between lessons is often boisterous.
- Students' attitudes to learning vary too much and, overall, are not good enough. Students report, and inspectors saw, that in some lessons low level disruptive behaviour and lack of engagement hinder learning.
- Teachers do not always intervene to challenge or correct inappropriate behaviour from students around the site and in lessons.
- The governing body does not yet challenge the school sharply or rigorously enough in respect of managing behaviour.

### The school has the following strengths

- The drive of the Principal and her senior team has successfully raised expectations of students' achievement and improved teaching in the school so that students' achievement has improved strongly over the last two years.
- Teachers have a thorough subject knowledge which is often used to good effect to plan interesting lessons.
- Older students reflected positively on improvements in teaching over the last two years.
- Provision in the sixth form is good.
- Relationships between staff and students are positive and students report, accurately, that they are given good additional support if they fall behind with their work.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection 37 lessons were observed and inspectors visited several more briefly. Six of the lesson observations were with senior leaders.
- Inspectors evaluated 53 staff questionnaire responses, and analysed 127 responses from Parent View and one letter from a parent during the inspection.
- Inspectors talked to students from all year groups and held meetings with governors and members of staff. There were telephone calls held with representatives from the local authority.
- School documents were scrutinised by the inspection team. Inspectors also looked at the school's records of behaviour, attendance and exclusions.

## Inspection team

Catherine Anwar, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Jones	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector
Penny Spencer	Additional Inspector
Hugh Betterton	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Rydens Enterprise School and Sixth Form College is a larger-than-average academy with a sixth form of 143 students.
- Just under a third of students are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils in receipt of free school meals, children looked after by the local authority or whose parents are in the armed services), which is average.
- Slightly fewer students than average, about one fifth, are from minority ethnic groups. An average number of students, about one in ten, has a first language which is not English.
- The proportion of disabled students and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about one sixth, twice as high as that nationally. The number of students supported by the school at school action is average, at around one in ten.
- Ten students attend off-site provision with a range of providers to support their educational needs. These include: the Applied Learning Project; Hersham Teaching Centre; The Sycamore Centre; and Surrey Lift Off Project.
- Fifteen Year 7 students are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding in English, and 32 in mathematics.
- The school works with a local 14 to 19 consortium, and also with a Surrey teaching school.
- The school exceeds the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum standards for achievement.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all staff manage behaviour consistently across the school so that all students recognise clear and high expectations and behave well.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in areas such as mathematics by:
  - developing teachers' understanding of how a range of teaching strategies encourages better learning
  - matching work in lessons to students' individual needs more effectively
  - further developing targeted marking and feedback.
- Improve the quality and precision of challenge offered by the governing body, particularly in terms of improving behaviour, through an external review and further training.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- School leaders' pursuit of high standards has been a key factor in raising attainment over the last three years, so school results compare favourably with schools taking students from similar backgrounds and students achieve well from their starting points.
- Achievement is good in English. Students of all abilities make at least expected progress and many do even better. Achievement in science and mathematics has not been so strong in the past, but has improved sharply this year and is now good. New leadership in mathematics since January has introduced a forensic analysis of students' needs in this subject, matched by targeted intervention.
- Students supported by the pupil premium achieve well; the gap between them and their peers is closing, although it remains just under a grade below. More than four fifths of these students make expected progress in English, and over a quarter make more than expected progress. This is much higher than nationally and reflects strong leadership and teaching in this department. Achievement in science is good, with these students actually achieving better than their peers.
- High standards of teaching in modern languages have led to good progress and achievement.
- Improving students' reading is a priority for the school and successful strategies have been introduced, such as in Year 7 where students follow a reading programme to enhance their enjoyment and develop their skills in reading. This has resulted in better progress in English, and in a higher rate of borrowing from the school library. Students are encouraged to read in tutor times, and inspectors saw a variety of useful reading tasks in different subjects.
- At the moment, some poor behaviour in lessons is preventing students from making even better progress.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is being used well. In English, a writing skills programme and additional teaching assistant support have accelerated progress; in mathematics, an online programme to develop mathematical thinking has successfully improved students' skills in this area.
- The significant improvement in recent years in the achievement of students with special educational needs is a consequence of strong leadership. Well-trained teaching assistants have a thorough knowledge of students and support them effectively.
- Students who attend alternative provision are closely monitored by teaching assistants to ensure success. Impressively, all Year 11 students in 2013 went on to further study, apprenticeships or employment, including those with special educational needs or attending alternative provision.
- The progress of higher ability students has improved substantially as a result of the school prioritising the needs of these students, and they now achieve better than students nationally in most subjects, although not yet in mathematics.
- Achievement in the sixth form has improved over the last two years and is now good. Students report high levels of satisfaction with their experience, and say they benefit from more focused teaching and smaller group sizes. They say that 'teachers go out of their way to support us and make sure that we do well'. More than half of students go on to university, and an increasing number go on to Russell Group universities.
- The four whole-school 'enterprise days', alongside a programme of learning skills for students in Years 7 and 8, contributes successfully to the development of students' skills-based learning.
- The school enters a small number of students early for mathematics GCSE in order to motivate them to achieve even better in the summer of Year 11. This has proved effective.

### The quality of teaching is good

- A sharper focus on how well teachers track the progress of students in their classes has improved the quality of teaching. Teachers are now able to monitor individual students and plan activities which ensure they make good progress over time.

- Good assessment of students' progress is used well to identify any who are falling behind. A comprehensive programme of support and intervention has contributed significantly to rising standards. Teachers run additional sessions for students who need extra help, notably in Year 11, and these have a significant impact on how well they achieve, including in mathematics.
- In most lessons teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan interesting activities which engage students and help them learn well. Good questioning ensures that students think more deeply and leads to better learning. Homework either builds well upon students' existing subject knowledge or extends it through research; this helps students to think for themselves and consolidate their learning.
- In some lessons, however, teaching is less effective in managing behaviour, is less imaginative and overly focused on levels and grades. This has a detrimental effect on students' behaviour and engagement, and means that they do not learn as well as they could. Teaching in English has led the way in the school and these weaker elements are more often seen in areas such as mathematics.
- Parents strongly agree that their children are well taught.
- The school works well with students in the transition from Year 6 to 7. Those requiring additional support are now identified early and staff from the inclusion team work with them and their parents to ensure a smooth entry into Year 7. This work has had a positive impact on the confidence of these students and, consequently, on their rates of progress.
- The majority of teachers mark students' work thoroughly, and students are clear about how to improve. In a minority of cases this is not true and the work in students' books is scruffy and poorly organised so these students remain unclear about how they can make better progress.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to benefit students' learning in class, leading to higher levels of achievement for these students.
- Professional development for teachers has been sensibly focused on key areas such as written feedback and assessment. A good coaching programme maintains and develops good teaching in most, but not all, classrooms.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students report that they feel safe in school, and are effectively taught about how to look after themselves in areas such as e-safety. They feel there is little bullying and that, when it happens, it is well managed by the school. Parents agree that their children are safe at the school.
- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- Teachers do not all show that they expect the same high standards of behaviour from students in lessons. Because of this, students sometimes call out and mess around and do not hear the teacher's instructions. Students say low level disruption is not consistently managed by teachers.
- Some students do not have the correct equipment or books in lessons and this slows down their learning. Work books are sometimes messy and do not demonstrate a pride in students' work.
- Too many students are boisterous as they move around the school at breaks and between lessons, indulging in horseplay and inappropriate language which is not tackled by staff. Although attendance and punctuality to school have improved, some students dawdle to lessons and show reluctance rather than keenness to get to class.
- The school policy on uniform is not consistently adhered to. Many students look untidy and this is not always corrected by staff. Consequently, students are unclear about expectations.
- There is a lot of litter around the school site, dropped by students. Although there is a high level of staff presence at break and lunchtime, staff do not all challenge this when they see it.
- Older students feel that behaviour in the school has improved in recent years, but there is more to do. The introduction of mixed-age tutoring and monitoring by pastoral leaders has had a positive impact in some areas. For example, there are few incidents of racist or homophobic behaviour. Students feel they are tolerant and accepting of difference. The number of exclusions

for poor behaviour has fallen over the last two years but is still slightly higher than nationally.

- The school has put a range of effective strategies in place to improve student attendance, and this has resulted in significant improvements so that attendance is now above national levels.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The strong drive for improvement of the Principal and her senior team has ensured that standards have risen through the work to improve teaching. They have been less successful in ensuring teachers manage behaviour consistently, and in evaluating their work in this area. The Principal has the strong support of staff and parents. Students also recognise improvements in teaching.
- The school's leaders have detailed knowledge of all aspects of safeguarding procedures and this is reflected in robust policies to ensure the safety of staff and students. A recent review of all relevant protocols and procedures has led to revisions to school practice which further enhance student safety. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements.
- Teachers are held to account robustly for the performance of students that they teach, and for meeting targets that they are set. This has contributed to the rise in standards.
- School leaders generally review and evaluate the school's performance effectively. Some judgements are overgenerous when matched against those of the local authority and the inspectors during this visit, notably on behaviour.
- Subject leaders are committed and lead their teams well overall. Good external courses are developing the skills of subject leaders further.
- The leadership of the sixth form is good. The introduction of initiatives to improve teaching and support for individual students means that students now make better progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator leads a strong team with skill and commitment.
- The school provides a good curriculum for students and adjusts this according to the needs of each cohort. For example, the Key Stage 4 science curriculum has been amended to make sure that all students are appropriately challenged and students are now achieving better grades. Responsive leadership in English constantly reviews the texts that are studied by the students to make sure that they are engaging and appropriate. This is appreciated by students.
- Students benefit from strong music and drama departments, and school productions are a highlight of their experience at the school. A wide range of cultural experiences, including a trip to Tanzania and a music tour to the Netherlands, contributes strongly to students' cultural development. Charity fundraising events are a regular part of school life, ensuring that students understand their social responsibility to help others.
- In the sixth form, students follow a discrete programme which enhances their employability skills and focuses on developing their 'spirit, character and soul'. Students value this course.
- The local authority, through Babcock International, supports the school well. The Principal has benefited from consultant support in planning and evaluation, and a leadership review in summer 2013 provided useful feedback to the school and the governors to inform future actions.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors receive a good range of information about teaching and achievement from the senior team. They visit the school regularly to validate information that they receive and offer challenge to the school over the achievement of students. They understand how teachers' performance is managed and how this links to salary progression, but they have not monitored closely enough the work of leaders and staff to improve students' behaviour. Governors effectively check the impact of the pupil premium funding on the outcomes for these students carefully, but are less well informed about the Year 7 catch-up funding and how this is used to support better progress for this group of pupils.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137137
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	431057

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,109
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Geoff Rolls
<b>Principal</b>	Ms Nikki Knight
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01932 242994
<b>Fax number</b>	01932 252896
<b>Email address</b>	info@rydens.surrey.sch.uk



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