

# Millais School

Depot Road, Horsham, RH13 5HR

**Inspection dates** 15–16 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Students of all abilities make rapid and sustained progress in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Their GCSE results are very high.
- Students entitled to additional funding, such as those who are disabled, with special educational needs or supported by the pupil premium, are making outstanding progress so that the achievement gap is closing rapidly especially in English and mathematics.
- Students develop a wide range of literacy and numeracy skills to great effect and use these widely in lessons so that they make outstanding progress across subjects. The students' oral skills are especially well developed.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, plan their lessons well and set clear targets so that students know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers are committed to their professional development and act as excellent role models to the students. As a result teaching is outstanding.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They are courteous and polite, arrive to lessons on time and are ready to learn. They confirm that the school is a safe place where learning flourishes.
- The range of subjects and topics is broad and balanced between academic and work-related courses so that students achieve exceptionally well.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through tutor time, lessons and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided.
- The headteacher, governors and other senior and middle leaders' leadership is outstanding. They provide the successful drive and ambition to keep improving the quality of teaching, students' achievement and the use of modern technology.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors made a number of shorter visits to other lessons. Inspectors observed an assembly and tutor periods.
- Inspectors held meetings with several groups of students, members of the senior leadership team, and leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the school's work. The lead inspector met the Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body and held a conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors discussed lessons they had seen with teaching staff and examined a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation document, school improvement plans, data about progress, standards, pupil premium funding, exclusions, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work in lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 223 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, four individual letters and emails from parents and carers. The lead inspector also held two telephone conversations with parents.
- The inspection team considered questionnaires completed by 100 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Jackie Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Butler	Additional Inspector
Clare Gillies	Additional Inspector
Mary Hoather	Additional Inspector
Keith Homewood	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized, non-selective girls-only secondary school.
- The school has a specialism in languages and since July 2011 has been a teaching school. The school also leads the Millais Alliance of over 30 schools committed to school to school support and improving professional development for staff at all levels. The headteacher is supporting a school recently assessed as requiring special measures.
- In March 2014 the school suffered a fire which damaged a significant proportion of the main building. All of the staff and students were evacuated successfully and within two or three weeks the school was running normally. The school leaders ensured that all members of the community were cared for both physically and psychologically. In addition there is a major building project underway at the school which has had an impact on the site.
- The proportion of students from an ethnic minority background or who speak English as an additional language is below national averages.
- A below average proportion of students is eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for specific groups, including looked after children and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- About 29 Year 7 students are eligible for catch-up funding which is for pupils who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is also below the national average. The most common needs relate to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Seven students attend off-site provision with a range of providers to support their educational needs. These include: Lancing Alternative Provision College, Crawley Alternative Provision College, Chalk Hill Child and Adolescent Hospital and The Lodge, Tanbridge House.
- 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?

- Achieve consistency in teachers' marking and in the way different departments promote students' literacy and numeracy skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Students join the school with above average levels of attainment. By the end of Year 11 students achieve five or more GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, considerably above national averages. This is the result of outstanding teaching.
- In 2013 GCSE biology, religious education and statistics, 100% of students achieved A\* to C. In art and design, chemistry, textiles, English literature, information technology, performing arts and social studies, over 90% of students achieved A\* to C.
- The very small group of students from minority ethnic groups achieve in line with all students: in 2013 GCSE examinations they achieved above national averages.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve above the national averages at GCSE and are rapidly closing the attainment gap with other students. In November 2013 all Year 11 students entered GCSE English. Students who are disabled and those with special educational needs achieved at least three levels of progress; the majority achieved four levels of progress and a few, five levels of progress. This compared very favourably with all other students.
- The school makes excellent use of funding for the small minority of students supported by the pupil premium. The attainment gap between these students and others in the school is closing rapidly especially in English and mathematics. In November 2013 the gap in English GCSE reduced by 21% for A\* to C achievement or half a grade. In mathematics the gap was a grade in 2013.
- Year 7 catch-up funding has been used to give students extra literacy and numeracy support. This has resulted in these students making at least good and sometimes outstanding progress in mathematics and English.
- A very few students with long-term medical problems attend alternative provision. The school monitors their achievement and attendance through progress reports from the providers. They do not do as well as other students because of missing school through their conditions.
- Students read widely and often across all subjects. This contributes to their outstanding achievement.
- The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all its students and monitors the progress of groups of students carefully. Where teachers spot students at risk of not meeting their targets, additional help swings into action through the mentoring programme which is often led by directors of learning.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- The excellent relationship between students and their teachers lies at the heart of the school's success. Students respond very well to teachers' high expectations. As a result, students make outstanding progress.
- Students have confidence in staff and feel well supported by their teachers and learning support assistants. In the words of a student who has special educational needs, 'Teachers take time to explain, the work is modified to meet our needs.'
- Teachers use their very good subject knowledge to plan challenging and well-resourced lessons. In a Year 7 history lesson, students were provided with resources at the right level, which enabled all of them to make judgements about whether the actions of Henry VIII were good or bad for England.
- Teachers provide students with regular, helpful and detailed comments on their work so that they have a clear awareness of what it is they need to do to improve. Students are given time to reflect on these targets and set themselves goals for their achievement. However, there is some

variation in the quality of target setting and reflection, which means the impact of the teachers' marking on students' progress is more limited.

- Teachers use technology very effectively to stimulate debate and as a result students' understanding of a topic. In a citizenship lesson on capital punishment the interactive whiteboard was used to project images that prompted thoughtful discussion among the students. In a religious education lesson a video of an atheist's opinions was used to prompt a debate about whether God is good.
- Literacy and numeracy are developed by teachers, but there is some variation across departments so that some opportunities are missed to increase students' understanding of unfamiliar words and their use of mathematics across the school.
- Students who are disabled or have special educational needs are exceptionally well supported by the director of learning for specialist intervention and the team of teaching assistants. As a result, these students make outstanding progress.

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

- The behaviour of students is outstanding in class and around the school. In lessons, regardless of the subject or year group, students show a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge. This is a major factor contributing to their outstanding achievement.
- Students work extremely hard, are enthusiastic and keen to do really well and achieve highly. They also realise the need to be responsible for their own learning. As one student recognised 'We are responsible for making sure we know what we need to do to improve our work.'
- Students conduct themselves thoughtfully and politely and their behaviour in an assembly was exemplary. They move around the school very sensibly despite the site being fragmented, due to the major building project that is taking place. Students use the movement time between lessons efficiently so that all lessons start punctually.
- They socialise very well together at break and lunchtime, acting with politeness and restraint.
- Students adopt the nine core values of the school from the start of their school life. For example there is mutual respect. The students said they feel valued: 'I love the school, it's cool.'
- Students are polite and considerate towards visitors, holding open doors and very willing to engage in conversation.
- There is no litter around the school and equipment and facilities are respected.
- Attendance has been significantly above average since 2011. The school monitors the attendance of the very few students who attend off-site provision.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students feel totally safe in the school and the curriculum supports them very well in learning how to stay safe. They have a clear understanding of e-safety.
- Students reported that their confidence in the evacuation procedures had been strengthened as a result of the fire in March when all staff and students were evacuated safely.
- There are very few fixed-term exclusions. The school has taken action to provide alternatives to exclusion by establishing the 'Personalised Learning Centre' which supports students with improving their behaviour.
- Students report that rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and firmly. The numbers of bullying incidents are small. They are recorded meticulously, and monitored before and after resolution. There is very little racist or homophobic bullying.
- Students are confident that there are adults they can talk to if they wish. The school ensured that after the fire, psychological support was available for all members of the school community who wanted to use it.
- The very large majority of respondents to Parent View consider that behaviour is managed well, that their children are happy at school and that they feel safe. The respondents to the staff questionnaire were of the same opinions.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders have an uncompromising and successful drive to improve the high levels of academic achievement. Students enter the school with above average levels of attainment, and are set aspirational targets that are challenging, but achievable.
- Leaders at all levels create a culture of high expectations and aspiration. Students have many opportunities to develop their leadership through becoming prefects, senior prefects and language leaders working with local primary schools, as well as younger students within the school. The great majority of students progress to further education.
- The school's view of its effectiveness is robust and accurate. This results in the school setting clear targets for improvement.
- The management of teaching and its impact on learning is highly effective. The school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. This is informed by rigorous checks across the school by senior and middle leaders.
- The provision of training for all staff is very effective. The Millais Alliance ensures that staff have the opportunity to work with other schools and colleges, so improving their practice which has improved the students' learning and progress. Leaders from the school support other schools to improve their teaching through the Alliance.
- The system of performance management is well organised and relates fully to the national 'Teachers' Standards'. Salary progression only occurs when merited by good performance.
- The courses that students take are broad and balanced, providing a good mix of academic and work-related subjects. Students have outstanding opportunities to engage in a wide variety of activities outside the classroom. These include the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, exchanges to China and Spain and practical support of a school in Zambia.
- The leadership of the school ensures that any form of discrimination is not tolerated. If needed, the school uses additional funding to support students' participation in activities provided by the school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. It is fostered by citizenship, personal development, assemblies and tutor periods. Students have the opportunity to work with pupils in local primary schools as language leaders.
- The school works closely with parents and carers through consultation evenings and involvement in pastoral matters where appropriate.
- The school works closely with the local authority which has supported the school in developing the school's care and guidance for its students.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body gives very strong leadership to the school. It makes sure that all safeguarding and child protection policies are met and that all appropriate policies are in place. It has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve.
  - Governors manage the school's finances well, including the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding. They check that this funding is spent wisely and contributes to individual students' success. They speak confidently about the quality of teaching and how this has led to students' outstanding achievement.
  - Governors are ambitious for the school, and recognise the impact the teaching school status has had on staff development. They show a detailed understanding of students' achievement and are fully aware of the relatively weaker performance of some subjects. Governors are fully involved in the performance management arrangements of all staff. They know what the school is doing to reward good performance and how it tackles the rare cases of underperformance.
  - Governors also critically review their own performance and act to improve the areas for development by purposefully engaging more fully with all parents and carers.

## 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>	126066
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	444372

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1499
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Elizabeth Barnes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leon Nettley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 254932
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