

New Regent's College

Tiger Way, Downs Road, London, E5 8QP

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Achievement is inconsistent. Progress of students in Key Stage 4 slowed after the previous inspection.
- Checks on the progress of students in Key Stage 4 have not been sufficiently detailed. As a result, staff have not identified and tackled underperformance quickly enough.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. It has not been good enough since the previous inspection to ensure all pupils achieve well from their starting points.
- Expectations of what students can achieve have not always been high enough, particularly in Key Stage 4.
- Teachers do not always make sure the most able pupils do work that is suitably difficult.
- Training to improve teaching does not always secure lasting improvements when staff do not put new skills consistently into practice.
- Some initiatives to improve teaching quality further have not been in place long enough to have secured lasting success.
- Pupils are not always encouraged sufficiently to make improvements to their work following teachers' feedback and marking.

The school has the following strengths

- Since he joined the school, the executive headteacher has worked closely with the management board and senior leaders. They have swiftly identified where developments are needed.
- The school is improving quickly. Leaders and managers, together with the management board, have tackled key priorities to improve teaching and raise achievement with urgency.
- Key Stage 4 students currently at the school make better progress as a result of recent improvements. In Years 1 to 9, pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Teachers make their expectations consistently clear and are positive role models.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Their attendance rapidly improves after they join the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all key stages. They visited 10 teaching sessions for pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 at the school. They visited six off-site training sessions for students in Key Stage 4. Inspectors observed 14 of these sessions together with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the management board and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- They looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including assessment information, minutes of meetings of the management board, the school's action plans and evaluations of the school's work. Inspectors also looked at records of the checks made on teaching and professional development. The school's records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- There were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) for the inspection to take them into account. Inspectors met with parents informally and considered the school's own survey of parents' views. The inspection considered eight responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patricia Barford	Additional Inspector
Angela Cook	Additional Inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school expanded after the previous inspection by joining with another local school in January 2013. It is a pupil referral unit catering for pupils aged six to 16. Almost all the pupils are at risk of exclusion or have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools.
- Pupils at risk of exclusion attend the school full-time for short periods, after which they return to mainstream schools. Pupils excluded from mainstream schools attend for longer before they return to mainstream education, or they begin employment or training.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 9 attend the lower school site. Until shortly before the inspection, almost all students in Years 10 and 11 attended the upper school site or job-related placements across a range of providers. At the time of the inspection, the school had very recently closed the upper school site. As a consequence, almost all Key Stage 4 students are in work-related placements.
- A few pupils attend The Restorative Learning School on a very short-term basis. This provision is in a separate building that shares the same site. It is for pupils who have been excluded from their mainstream school for a fixed-term period of more than five days.
- The large majority of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs for behaviour, social and emotional difficulties.
- Three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Black African and Caribbean are the largest groups. One quarter of the pupils speaks English as an additional language. Very few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Most pupils are boys.
- A very few pupils in Key Stage 4 are at the very earliest stages of learning English as an additional language. They attend this school because they do not have a place in a mainstream school. They are supported in developing their English speaking and other skills through partnerships with other local colleges.
- All the pupils on roll at the school are eligible for additional funding known as pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The school organises a breakfast club.
- There has been a high number of changes to teaching staff and the leadership team over recent time. New members have joined the management board over the past year. The executive headteacher took up post in June 2013. He is also the headteacher of another local secondary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement and teaching from requiring improvement to good, by making sure that:
 - expectations of what all pupils and students can achieve are consistently high, particularly in Key Stage 4
 - teachers always set work that is hard enough for the most able pupils
 - the achievement of students in Key Stage 4 is always carefully checked and the information used to address any underperformance quickly
 - pupils are encouraged strongly to follow teachers' feedback and guidance in order to improve their work
 - following any training for staff, all teachers consistently put new approaches and new skills into practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The progress of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, has not been consistently good over a sufficiently long period of time. This is due to variations in the quality of teaching and insufficiently ambitious expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in Key Stage 4.
- In the past, checks on the progress all students make in Key Stage 4, including girls, the most able, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, were not effective in identifying underperformance. As a result, students not making the progress that they should were not identified quickly. In national assessments in 2013, Year 11 students reached lower standards than students at similar schools nationally, including in English and mathematics.
- Improvements to the subjects students can choose, and to the job-related training they can attend, are helping to raise their achievement. These have not been in place for enough time to show a sustained impact on driving up students' attainment in Key Stage 4.
- Teachers do not always give the most able pupils hard enough work. These pupils make better progress in Years 1 to 9 in sessions with specialist English and mathematics teachers who challenge them to do harder work.
- Pupils typically join the school with below average attainment. Pupils from different ethnic minority backgrounds, including those speaking English as an additional language, make similar good progress to the others in Years 1 to 9. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 often practise speaking and listening. This helps all pupils to develop their self-expression, as well as successfully promoting their personal and social skills.
- Regular reading in Key Stages 1 and 2 helps pupils practise letters and the sounds they make, and build up reading fluency. Pupils enjoy reading aloud to adults. They work hard to increase their knowledge of words. Older pupils in Key Stage 3 are confident in reading aloud. Interesting reading activities across a range of subjects hold their interest and promote positive attitudes to reading.
- The very small proportion of girls who attend the school achieve equally well compared with the boys. In Years 1 to 9, staff make sure they are engrossed in their learning and that their individual needs are attended to.
- Pupils attending The Restorative Learning School settle quickly to their work. Staff make sure they benefit from calm and supportive surroundings.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it has not ensured pupils achieve consistently well over a length of time.
- Variability in teaching and in pupils' progress remains. Leaders regularly check teaching quality, including the off-site work-related training. They have introduced a well-selected programme of staff training to raise the quality of teaching. When approaches and skills introduced through training are not consistently followed or put into practice well, their impact is diminished.
- The most able do not make rapid progress when tasks are not difficult enough to suitably challenge them. They make better progress in Years 1 to 9 when specialist teachers set them work that is tailored to their abilities in English and mathematics.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and suggest how they might improve their work further. When too few pupils respond to their feedback, the effect of this guidance on raising achievement is reduced.
- The school's leaders use additional funding to promote equality and tackle discrimination. They use the extra money to arrange educational outings and visits for all pupils in Years 1 to 9, for example to Epping Forest and the City of London. Additional sessions with specialist therapists, including art and drama, promote pupils' personal and social skills, and foster positive attitudes

to learning.

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 9 because the subjects they study successfully engage their interest. Pupils in a Key Stage 3 literacy session worked hard to identify the key features of a newspaper article. They were absorbed in studying the case of a real-life miscarriage of justice following a murder in the 1950s. In another literacy session, pupils concentrated hard on reading historical accounts of the spread of cholera during the Victorian era.
- Well-trained additional adults in Years 1 to 9 work closely with teaching staff to support pupils' learning and good behaviour effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have created a culture that encourages all staff to make their expectations of pupils' behaviour consistently clear. The school's records show the behaviour of individual pupils improves markedly over the time they are at the school.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and are enthusiastic to learn. Around the school they are orderly and respectful.
- Personal, social and emotional development is promoted strongly. Pupils are encouraged to think about their actions and change their behaviour for the better.
- Pupils gain confidence in checking their conduct for themselves and in realising when they are not behaving as well as they should. Their self-esteem grows when they take responsibility for calming themselves down without being reminded by the adults.
- Good behaviour is celebrated and effective support given to all pupils who need extra guidance. Pupils are typically keen to behave in the way that the school's leaders and staff encourage. Behaviour is not outstanding because sometimes pupils need reminding of the conduct that is required.
- Pupils are sure that bullying is rare, as the school's logs show. They are confident that staff will help them should any problems occur.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe at school. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe from harm. Visitors from the local emergency services give training on how to keep safe outside school. Through effective partnerships with services for young people, the school helps selected pupils understand specific risks and offers additional support to them and their families.
- The school's leaders and staff work hard to make clear that attending school regularly is important. They follow up absence very quickly, including absence from the off-site work-related training. Pupils' attendance rises very quickly from the time pupils join the school, because they enjoy coming.

The leadership and management are good

- Since his appointment, the executive headteacher has taken effective steps to find out where the school needs to do better. He has quickly identified priorities for action to bring about swift improvements. He has led decisive action to tackle underperformance.
- Through strong teamwork with leaders, managers and the management board, he is driving improvements to the quality of teaching and raising achievement. Working together they are ambitious to make sure the school improves rapidly.
- Training for staff is carefully chosen. It is increasing the quality of teaching in all year groups, including for students attending off-site work-related training in Key Stage 4.
- Higher expectations of what pupils can achieve are helping to raise pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics further.
- Leaders check the progress pupils make in Years 1 to 9 carefully. Similar checks on the progress students make in Key Stage 4 have only recently been introduced. They have not yet secured consistently better progress for students in Years 10 and 11 over a sustained period.

- Leaders make sure that all the adults are consistently positive role models. As a result, working relationships are fostered strongly. Pupils from a wide range of different backgrounds get on well together.
- Leaders of subjects and other aspects of the school's work have made sure that the activities teachers give pupils are interesting and relevant to their interests. In Years 1 to 9, subject work successfully captures pupils' attention.
- The school uses partnerships well to support pupils, for example to organise additional subject activities for pupils, and to help pupils settle successfully when they return to mainstream schools.
- Social skills are emphasised consistently throughout the school. For example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 cooperate to write stories. Thinking about and understanding the consequences of their behaviour strengthen pupils' moral development. In Key Stage 3, staff set tasks that help pupils to think about moral issues. Art and music sessions develop pupils' cultural awareness. Outings are well selected to offer spiritual experiences.
- All these strengths demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further.
- The local authority has worked effectively with the school. It arranged the appointment of the executive headteacher. It gives support in checking teaching quality and is keen to see the school improve the overall effectiveness of its work quickly.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management board takes an active interest in all the school's work. It works closely with the executive headteacher and leaders, sharing their determination to see the school improve rapidly. It has a clear understanding of the quality of teaching. It fulfils its role well in managing performance and checks regularly that teaching is improving. It has supported the school's leaders in addressing any underperformance and setting ambitious targets. The management board receives regular information about pupils' progress. It has encouraged leaders to improve the information that it gathers about students' progress in Key Stage 4. Board members are confident in challenging the school. They take their statutory duties seriously. They make sure that safeguarding duties, site safety and maintenance are checked regularly and meet requirements. The management board maintains strong control of the school's budget and, together with senior leaders, is steering the school well as it moves on to one site.

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	134635
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	430651

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	6–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The management board
Chair	Steve Belk
Headteacher	Richard Brown
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 November 2011
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