

Mayfield School

Mayfield Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO2 0RH

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students' achievement at the end of Key Stage 4 is not good enough. Boys make slower progress than girls.
- Some students do not make enough progress because the work set for them is not hard enough. Teachers do not all offer appropriate challenge to students.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are not good enough to help students make good progress in all subjects.
- Not all middle leaders are sufficiently focused on checking the progress of students and the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- Although improving, there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching across subjects and year groups.
- Students' literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed.
- Senior leaders and governors have not ensured that achievement is good enough by the end of Key Stage 4.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and his team give high priority to improving the quality of teaching and the curriculum. Because of this drive, both aspects are continuing to get better.
- The headteacher models high standards and expectations of behaviour, and has created a positive culture of mutual respect.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. Students are punctual, attendance is improving and exclusions have reduced.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students are very well cared for on an individual basis and there are very positive working relationships between staff and students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 31 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with senior leaders. They also observed tutor time, an assembly and activities taking place during Careers Week for Year 10 students.
- Inspectors looked at students' work in lessons and over time and discussed the students' learning and progress with students.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils from Years 7 to 10 and there were informal discussions with students before school and at break times to gather their views. At the time of the inspection Year 11 students were not in school, having completed their examinations.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including lesson observation records, governors' minutes, self-evaluation information, development plans, safeguarding documentation and attainment and progress data.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and an independent survey, as well as 33 responses received from the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector
Suzanne Richards	Additional Inspector
Jonathan Whitcombe	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those students known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The large majority of students are White British and speak English as their first language.
- There is alternative provision at Highbury College for a substantial, but rapidly reducing, number of students in Year 10 and Year 11.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school holds a number of awards including Crested, an accreditation for work with dyslexic students, the ICT mark and The Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching across different subjects and year groups, so that all is at least good and all groups of students make good progress, by ensuring that:
 - work is set at the right level for all groups of students, particularly boys, those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and disabled students and those with special educational needs, so that it is not too easy or too hard
 - students receive clear feedback in lessons and in marking so that they know how to improve their work and that all act on the advice given to them by teachers
 - there are more opportunities for students to write extensively and to develop and use their mathematical understanding across a range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders and heads of house focus on raising standards by taking more direct responsibility for their areas and subjects, particularly for improving the quality of teaching and in holding teams to account for the progress of the students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with well below average reading, writing and mathematical skills. Students' achievement requires improvement because their attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4 have not risen rapidly or consistently enough since the last inspection.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, has been in line with the national average for the last two years.
- Attainment in English has improved over the same period and is in line with the national average. Attainment in mathematics is improving, but at a slower rate. The overall pattern of attainment in GCSE examinations has been, and remains, uneven.
- Students make better progress in English and science than in mathematics, modern foreign languages and humanities, although standards are improving in all these subjects.
- Most students who are eligible for the pupil premium achieve less well than their peers. Their grades are, on average, one grade below those of other students in both English and mathematics. The gap is closing, but at a slow rate.
- Students with a statement of special educational needs, those supported through school action plus and boys make less good progress than other students. This is often as a result of poor behaviour and attendance. More able students are not always given suitably challenging work and so make less progress than other students. Middle ability students and students who are supported through school action make better progress than their peers.
- Students attending off-site provision make good progress on courses that are suited to their specific needs.
- Many students have weak reading and writing ability and this slows their progress. The school is focusing on developing literacy skills across all subjects, in particular students' ability to write more detailed answers. Students in Year 7 and Year 8 have the opportunity to do additional reading before school and this is helping to develop their literacy skills.
- There are too few opportunities for students to develop their mathematical understanding across a range of subjects.
- Standards are rising throughout the school as a result of more consistent teaching and better assessment, especially at Key Stage 3.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is too variable across subjects and year groups. There is not enough teaching which is of a consistently high standard over time, although there are recent improvements. These changes have not yet had a sustained effect on GCSE results.
- At times, teachers do not set suitable work for their students. Consequently, more able students are not stretched and spend too much time on tasks that are too easy for them. Work is sometimes too difficult for the less able students and they become less attentive and do not concentrate.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to students, although effective in some classes, lack consistency across the school. Not all teachers provide clear enough advice for students about how to further improve their work. Teachers do not always make sure that students follow up this advice by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood.
- Some teachers have high expectations for all their students and they use the good information they have about their students to plan learning that enthuses and engages students. As a result, these students develop good attitudes to their learning and make good progress.
- In many lessons teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge students to think deeply about their learning.
- Some teachers question students relentlessly to probe and develop their understanding, and

encourage them to explain their reasoning and ask other students to comment or develop their answers further. These teachers also focus on developing students' literacy skills and on providing opportunities for high quality extended writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is good because most have positive attitudes to their learning which help them to make progress in their lessons. Some students do not engage actively in their lessons and some do not attend regularly enough.
- Students are courteous and polite to each other and to adults and visitors. Relationships are very good.
- Students respect each other's opinions when answering questions in lessons. The school is calm and orderly. Different year groups interact positively with each other.
- There are good systems in place to ensure that behaviour is managed well. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that staff quickly deal it with.
- Staff report that behaviour has improved dramatically since the last inspection.
- The number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions has decreased over time, as a result of improved behaviour management and the strategic use of alternative provision. However, figures are still above the national average.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The school has well-developed systems, all staff are properly trained in safeguarding procedures, and good practice in safer recruitment is well established.
- Students say they feel safe at school and they appreciate the support available to them should they need it from teachers and other adults. Parents and carers are very positive about how safe their children are in school, and are very positive about the school overall.
- Students enjoy school and they wear their uniform with great pride. They respect the school and there is very little litter or graffiti.
- There are many opportunities for students to take on leadership roles, for example as prefects and as members of the school council, and to work with younger pupils.
- Attendance has been a high priority for the school and has improved as a result of effective strategies by the school. It is now broadly in line with the national average.
- The school ensures that students who attend alternative providers for their education also behave well, by checking and monitoring their attendance and progress carefully.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in some lessons students are less than enthusiastic in their learning.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the many beneficial changes introduced since the last inspection have not brought about consistently good quality teaching and good achievement.
- Middle leaders are involved in tracking students' progress, but not all are sufficiently effective in checking progress data and the quality of teaching. Not all subject leaders check regularly enough the quality of teaching in their areas and the progress of their students. Heads of house do not check students' progress sufficiently well.
- The headteacher provides very strong and incisive leadership and there have been many improvements since the last inspection. Robust action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching and this has resulted in an improvement in students' progress and attendance and an improvement in behaviour. Staff are enthusiastic and very committed to the school's vision.
- Middle leaders comment that they are now held to greater account by senior leaders, especially by using assessment information and this, in turn, is starting to help them to manage their staff

more effectively.

- The school has a largely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, but judgements are sometimes too generous.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and well matched to students' needs. In the second half of the summer term all students move up to the next year group, which contributes to a smooth and positive transition from one year to the next.
- Teachers appreciate the training programmes which the school has in place to support and develop them. These are linked to robust systems to manage teachers' performance, which ensure that staff at all levels are held fully to account for the progress of the students they teach.
- Students' literacy, especially writing, is a priority for the school, but there is not yet effective leadership and management of this across all subjects.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding, including those who attend other settings, meet the current statutory requirements.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well through the highly inclusive culture of the school and by support for individual students. Discrimination is not tolerated in any form.
- The local authority provides appropriate support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is a strength. Governors are committed and have the skills and ability to hold the school to account and to identify clear priorities. They are well equipped to carry out their statutory duties, which they do effectively. They have a largely accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a good understanding of the performance of the students and how this compares to the national picture. They have contributed to improvements over time, in particular to improving attendance and behaviour, but they recognise that there is more to do in terms of improving teaching and achievement, especially in mathematics, science and literacy. They have a good understanding about the impact of pupil premium funding and how it is benefiting students' progress. They challenge and support school leaders effectively. Governors ensure that the performance management of staff is effective and rigorous and are aware of what is being done to reward good teachers and to tackle underperformance. They ensure that effective arrangements for the safeguarding of students are in place and that resources are managed effectively.

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	116463
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	426546

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1005
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bruce Marr
Headteacher	David Jeapes
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2011
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