

Yateley School

School Lane, Yateley, Hampshire GU46 6NW

Inspection dates

25–26 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils make the very good progress across all subjects which they are capable of doing, given their higher than average starting points.
- Pupils make weak progress in science, humanities and modern foreign languages.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 3 varies too much between subjects. In some subjects, only a very small proportion of pupils make the strong progress they are capable of making.
- Some senior leaders do not make enough use of information on pupils' progress in their monitoring of the departments they oversee.
- A number of subject leaders do not have a good enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the departments they manage.
- Teaching requires improvement because it is too variable throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. In some subject areas, actions to improve weak teaching have not secured improvements rapidly enough.
- Some lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour which is not tackled effectively.
- In several classes, pupils display poor attitudes to learning.
- Until recently, governors have not made good enough use of information on pupils' performance to hold leaders to account.

The school has the following strengths

- The 16–19 study programmes are good. They meet learners' needs well. The effective head of sixth form monitors learners' progress on their chosen pathway closely.
- Leaders have improved safeguarding procedures, including better record-keeping. Teachers provide pupils with strong and well-planned opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Most parents are positive about the school's work. The vast majority of parents would recommend the school.
- New systems for collating information about pupils' progress in Key Stage 4 help leaders get a clear overview.
- Teaching in graphics at GCSE and A level is good. It is rapidly improving in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve the way teachers use information on pupils' starting points, especially in Key Stage 3 so that:
 - pupils make strong progress and achieve the very good GCSE results of which they are capable
 - the work teachers set is sufficiently challenging for pupils who enter the school with levels of ability that are significantly above average
 - pupils are challenged when they show a lack of pride in their work, or produce work that is below the standard that their Key Stage 2 level indicates they can achieve.
- Improve the quality of pupils' learning, especially but not solely, in science and modern foreign languages, to the standard of the best in the school, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - pose questions that promote rapid progress for pupils of all abilities
 - provide pupils with feedback in line with the school's policy, and check whether it is helping pupils to improve
 - use the new scale for assessing pupils' work accurately and consistently.
- Urgently improve the way new approaches and systems for managing behaviour and improving attendance are applied so that:
 - disruptive behaviour in class is eradicated
 - the attendance of disadvantaged pupils improves.
- Ensure that all leaders are more rigorous and accurate when evaluating strengths and weaknesses by:
 - placing greater emphasis on pupils' progress when they judge the quality of teaching
 - making better use of the new effective systems that provide an overview of pupils' progress when they hold the staff they manage to account.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders' expectations of how well pupils should behave, how hard they should work and how much progress they should make are not high enough.
- Although the recently appointed assistant headteacher has improved systems for managing behaviour, new approaches have not yet led to consistently good behaviour in all lessons. Leaders judge behaviour to be better than it is, resulting in their not sufficiently prioritising improving behaviour across the school.
- Leaders' actions to improve teaching in some subjects, namely but not solely science and modern foreign languages, have not been effective enough.
- Not all senior leaders are rigorous enough in the way they hold subject leaders to account for the progress pupils make, especially at Key Stage 3. Some senior leaders do not insist that subject leaders ensure pupils who enter the school with attainment that is significantly above average make strong progress so they continue to achieve highly.
- Improvements have been made to the way teachers' performance targets are set and reviewed and some teachers did not move up the pay scale last year. However, there is not sufficient clarity or consistency in the way leaders at all levels judge whether targets relating to pupils' progress have been met.
- The school has recently made changes to the curriculum and the way pupils are grouped. In Year 7, pupils are now taught in mixed-ability groups for a number of subjects. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this change.
- The school has also recently moved away from assessing using levels at Key Stage 3. Not all heads of department have ensured that the new system is being accurately or appropriately used. Some heads of department have not kept a sharp enough focus on the progress of pupils in the transitional period as the new system beds in.
- Leaders have not, until recently, monitored the impact of interventions to help identified pupils in Year 7 catch up. The special educational needs coordinator is new in post and does not have a clear enough understanding of the impact of additional help that targeted pupils receive. The new senior leader responsible for assessment has rightly identified this as an area that needs to improve and has good plans in place to do so. Funding for the small proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged has had a positive impact on their progress, especially at Key Stage 4 where gaps have narrowed.
- Leaders have improved the monitoring of teaching so that they undertake a wider range of monitoring activities, include looking at books, observing lessons and reviewing pupils' progress. However, as yet the evidence from these different monitoring activities is not effectively collated. As a result, leaders do not have a definitive overview of how well teachers are performing. There are good plans in place to do this but it is too early to evaluate their impact. Teachers who need additional support receive it through well-planned, generic training on key approaches, as well as more bespoke, subject-related guidance.
- New senior leaders have made good improvements to the way assessment information on pupils' progress in Key Stage 4 is collated so it is clearer and therefore much easier for leaders to identify patterns and trends. This is beginning to sharpen the way some leaders hold to account the subject leaders they manage. It has not yet had enough impact on improving pupils' progress in some subjects.
- The local authority has supported the school by conducting a review in March 2015. The review accurately identified weaker subject areas. The review also identified that there needed to be more rigour in the way senior leaders use information on pupils' progress to hold subject leaders to account. It included a clear target for improving this aspect of leadership. The local authority's advisers have provided well-focused help for English and science. However, the support for leaders to improve the way they hold subject leaders to account has been limited.
- The school effectively promotes tolerance. Posters around the school indicate that equality is valued and that there is no place for any form of prejudice, including homophobic bullying. Pupils commented positively on the impact of assemblies that deal with equality issues. Better systems for recording mean that any incidents where pupils show discrimination are dealt with robustly.
- The school effectively fosters a love of the arts through the curriculum as well as additional clubs, well-planned drama productions and music competitions. This makes a strong contribution to the school's successful work to promote pupils' spiritual, social, moral, and cultural development. Pupils have the opportunity to be involved in activities ranging from building a plane to organising charitable events. Assemblies given by representatives from charities further develop pupils' sense of empathy.
- Pupils are given a good grounding in the values of modern Britain. Participation in mock trial competitions, mock elections and the pupil council teaches them to value democracy. In religious education, pupils are taken on trips, for example to the Jewish Museum, to ensure they know about and respect different cultures and religions. Tolerance is promoted through assemblies and poster campaigns

such as a recent one to stamp out homophobic bullying.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governance improved recently and is now more robust. However, in the past governors had a limited understanding of how information about pupils' performance (in comparison with national averages) can be used to judge how well the school is doing. This meant that governors did not pick up soon enough on the underachievement that led to the poor results in 2014.
 - Since then, the governing body has substantially changed the way it works and is now leaner and sharper. There are no committees now, so all governors are in possession of all the information. However, changes made to governance have not yet led to improvements in pupils' progress in a number of subjects.
 - Governors have started to hold leaders to account more robustly. They visit the school to see it at work and ask leaders, including subject leaders, to present reports at full governing body meetings where leaders are asked challenging questions.
 - The impact of this more rigorous approach is evident in the way governors have given clear directions to newly appointed leaders and carefully monitor how well they are carrying out these priorities. For example, the new leader responsible for assessment has been asked to make predictions more reliable and to improve tracking.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There have been many improvements made since the new leader responsible for safeguarding joined the school, the most significant being a change from paper-based to electronic record-keeping. This has allowed the new leader to monitor the impact of actions taken to keep children safe and check that policies and procedures are adhered to. The school has good procedures in place to respond to a serious incident. These are outlined in newsletters that are sent home. Despite this, some pupils indicated to inspectors that they need further reassurance that they will be safe at school, should such an incident occur.
 - The new leader has been particularly effective at ensuring that pupils receive the support they need from external agencies, convening meetings with key partners including the local authority and ensuring action is taken in a timely manner.
 - There is a comprehensive safety programme delivered through the personal education programme and citizenship lessons. This includes guidance about maintaining good mental health, detailed information on staying safe online and grooming, along with well-thought-out advice about developing better self-esteem. Radicalisation is discussed in citizenship lessons so pupils are aware of its origins and context. Teachers are receiving training on a rolling programme to keep them up to date with information relating to radicalisation and extremism.
 - The school enjoys high approval ratings from parents. Responses relating to how happy and safe children feel were notably strong.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies too much. In some subject areas such as science, teaching is mostly weak. In some other subjects, notably English and humanities, there is a mix of strong and weak teaching. In some practical subjects, such as physical education (PE) and technology, the teaching is mainly strong. It is improving fast in mathematics. Teaching in the 16–19 study programme is generally better than at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work does not always help them to improve. This is because the feedback teachers give when they mark work does not always fully adhere to the school's policy. For example, on some occasions, it does not provide pupils with a clear enough view of how well they are doing.
- Although the modern foreign languages faculty leader is very clear about what changes are needed, teaching requires improvement because teachers do not ensure that pupils receive the incremental and carefully planned introductions to new grammar and vocabulary needed to secure good progress. Not enough care is given to promoting accuracy and good pronunciation.
- In science lessons, teachers do not routinely check that learning is consolidated before they move on to the next topic. Pupils do not always get enough opportunity to explain scientific ideas at length in writing.
- In a number of classes, teachers spend a long time posing questions directed at targeted individuals, while the rest of the class look on. Despite the simplicity of some questions, targeted pupils sometimes take a long time to answer and this slows their progress and that of their classmates.
- In some classes, teachers do not make enough use of the information they have on what pupils already know and what they have already achieved when planning lessons. Consequently, the activities set for

pupils are sometimes not stretching enough. For instance, in an English lesson, pupils read competently, but the teacher did not stretch pupils by encouraging them to explore different styles of reading aloud so as to engage the audience more.

- In some humanities lessons and in a number of English lessons, teaching is effective because teachers think carefully about the resources they use so that they are challenging and stimulating.
- The teaching in mathematics is improving rapidly because the subject leader has developed a well-thought-out approach for building pupils' confidence and fluency. Staff use effective questioning and provide opportunities for pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils' progress is closely monitored in this subject area in order to assess the impact of new approaches.
- Teaching in technology, especially graphics, is strong and has led to some good results. In graphics and some other practical subjects, notably PE, teachers make it very clear to pupils the subject-related competences and other learning skills they will need to succeed. Teachers model these skills and as a result, pupils demonstrate them effectively in both practical and theory work.
- Teaching in 16–19 study programmes is effective. In most classes, teachers make it very clear what academic vocabulary learners need to use and in what context to use it. Teachers provide learners with helpful tactics to assist them in achieving high marks in A-level examinations.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement because in some lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, but in others pupils display poor attitudes to learning, including not participating in question and answer sessions and not following teachers' instructions.
- A number of pupils told inspectors that their classmates displayed poor attitudes to learning, including talking while the teacher was giving explanations to the whole class. This made it difficult for them to learn well.
- Some pupils do not have enough pride in their work. Teachers do not always insist that pupils present their work neatly and keep their books free from graffiti.
- In some lessons pupils were eager to learn and wanted to find out more about the topic they were studying. However, in a number of lessons pupils were disengaged from their learning and did not complete the tasks teachers set for them even when the teachers requested them to do so.
- Aspects of the careers guidance programme are strong, such as opportunities for pupils to participate in work experience and hear about potential careers from visiting speakers in Key Stage 4. The careers programme starts in Year 7. Some pupils are not clear enough about the information they receive through this programme.
- Pupils benefit from the modules delivered as part of personal development which help them grow better self-esteem and develop a greater sense of well-being. They understand well how to stay safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because some pupils display poor behaviour in lessons which is not always addressed well by teachers.
- The new leader responsible for behaviour has introduced systems for managing behaviour. However, these systems are not consistently applied by all staff in all lessons.
- The new, more precise recording system has contributed to a recent increase in reported incidents of poor behaviour and bullying. Analysis of information collated shows that since the start of term, there have been nearly as many incidents where pupils have used derogatory language, including racist language, than in the whole of the last academic year. In response to this, there has been a focus on raising awareness of equality issues around school and changes to the way the school responds to bullying.
- Better monitoring procedures mean leaders have a clearer picture of what types of poor behaviour are most prevalent and which pupils need to be targeted. Leaders are beginning to use this information to tackle poor behaviour more effectively. As a result of taking a more robust and precise approach, the number of fixed-term exclusions rose last year.
- Attendance improved overall last year compared with 2014, but persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils increased in 2015. The school checks the attendance of disadvantaged pupils carefully and a raft of interventions have been introduced to improve it, including using legal measures such as fines. However,

they are not yet having an impact as disadvantaged pupils' overall attendance remains too low, and persistent absence for this group has increased.

- The responsible leader works closely with the leaders of alternative provision to ensure that pupils attending off-site provision make progress and develop the personal skills they need to succeed when they return to Yateley School.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Nearly half the Year 11 pupils entered the school with high Key Stage 2 scores. However, in 2015 not enough pupils made the very strong progress of which they were capable, given their high starting points.
- Despite their higher than average starting points, pupils' progress was weak in 2014, and was significantly below average in science, mathematics, English, humanities and languages. In 2015, pupils' progress did not improve enough. It went up in English and mathematics, but declined in science and modern foreign languages. It improved slightly in humanities but remained below the national average.
- The subjects named above are part of the suite of qualifications known as the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc). As a result of poor progress in some subjects that are included in the Ebacc, the percentage gaining this measure was low in 2014 and remained below average in 2015.
- In 2014, the school's GCSE predictions were over-optimistic. This was a contributory factor in the dip in results because not enough pupils were targeted for additional help. In 2015, following improvements, predictions were more accurate but remained significantly too optimistic, most notably in some science subjects, history and French.
- The improved Key Stage 3 tracking system indicates that too few pupils are making greater than expected progress in several subjects such as science, French, Spanish and history. This is not good, given pupils' higher than average starting points. This is because teachers are not sufficiently focused on ensuring pupils make good progress from their starting points and work set does not always enable pupils to make good strides in their learning.
- The new Key Stage 3 tracking system indicates that disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 3 make progress in line with their peers and in some subjects exceed it. However, the progress made by pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs varies too much between subjects and year groups. In some year groups, it is weak when compared with that of other pupils, for example in Year 8. The superficial way in which the progress of this group has been tracked to date has not supported pupils with additional needs in moving forward in their learning.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils improved in 2015, in English and mathematics GCSE. Consequently, the gap narrowed between their progress and that of their peers from most starting points. From some starting points, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than their peers, for example, less-able disadvantaged pupils in English. However, in mathematics, the gap widened in the proportion of disadvantaged less-able pupils making greater than expected progress when compared with others. The mathematics subject leader has identified why this was and has good plans in place to ensure that this group of pupils make progress line with their peers in 2016.
- Changes made to courses at Key Stage 4 in English led to improved GCSE results in 2015. However, pupils in Key Stage 3 are not routinely provided with the deep learning required to succeed in the new GCSE examinations that are being introduced from 2016 onwards.
- In graphics GCSE and BTEC business studies, pupils achieve highly because teachers are very clear about precisely how pupils need to learn and what they need to do to be successful.
- The school prepares pupils well for their next stages. All of the pupils at the end of Year 11 last year went on to education, employment or further training. Just over half of Year 11 pupils last year decided to do their 16–19 study programmes in the school's sixth form. The number of pupils in the current Year 11 choosing to stay on this year is higher .

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The school's sixth form meets the needs and aspirations of its learners well, whether they plan to go on to university or enter immediately into the world of work. It provides a suitably wide range of A-level courses, as well as a smaller number of vocational options. These are overseen by the effective head of sixth form who maintains a relentless focus on ensuring learners make good progress towards meeting their challenging targets.
- Achievement in the sixth form is improving. In recent years, the progress learners made in academic subjects has declined to below that seen nationally. This decline was halted last year because the sixth-form leader made successful changes. He has rightly focused on ensuring that teaching deepens and furthers learners' learning and provides good progress. Teachers' interventions for learners identified as being at risk of not meeting their challenging targets, are now more effective. Progress in graphics and sociology is notably strong.
- During the inspection, progress seen was good in most but not all lessons. It was strongest where teachers were focused on using every opportunity to extend learners' levels of expertise, including by modelling how to use academic language and setting task that help learners to cope with the higher challenge of A-level examination questions. Up until now, learners studying vocational courses made progress that was lower than the national average. They now make much better progress because they are given greater guidance in how to meet the course requirements.
- Tighter tracking and referral systems for learners who are falling behind have been introduced and have contributed to better achievement. There are clear steps for teachers to follow if they have any concerns about a learner's progress or attitude to learning. The sixth-form leader carefully checks that any additional support given by teachers makes a difference. Where necessary, if there is more than one concern from the same class, the head of sixth form alerts subject leaders so they can check that teachers have strong enough subject knowledge and understanding of what is required at this level.
- The leader, together with the tutor team, ensure that the sixth-form environment is one in which learners are able to learn well and typically make good progress, but also supports them to develop into confident young citizens ready for life in modern Britain. Careers guidance is strong. Learners' potential career aspirations are taken into account and nurtured right from the moment they apply. For example, learners are matched with a form tutor who has experience or knowledge of the type of career they are hoping to follow.
- In Year 12, learners spend time finding out about potential destinations. Work experience helps provide learners with a valuable insight into possible careers. They mainly arrange their own work but the sixth-form team recognise the difficulty of getting placements in some professions and use links they have developed with employers to enable learners to access placements in journalism, education and health. A whole raft of other activities including visiting speakers, support for applications and educational visits also contribute to the school's success in ensuring learners flourish in their next steps.
- Tutor time and assemblies, as well as volunteering activities, contribute well to learners' broader development. This includes learning about how to keep safe online, staying healthy and being challenged to question any discriminatory or derogatory language. The 'social diversity champions group' of sixth formers actively works to challenge prejudice of any type, including homophobia.
- The sixth form is caring and nurturing. The leader makes sure learners in difficulty receive as much help as they need to succeed in their studies. Consequently, sixth formers are strong role models for younger pupils and help to run societies and additional activities. They behave well and exhibit high levels of maturity. The school counsellor provides helpful support for those who find the pressures of moving on to the next stage of their lives difficult. Retention between Year 12 and 13 is high and those who need to re-sit examinations in either English or mathematics are well supported.

School details

Unique reference number	116433
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10003513

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,296
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Cairns
Headteacher	Mr Mark Jackman
Telephone number	01252 879222
Website	www.yateleyschool.net
Email address	admin@yateley.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 November 2010

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized comprehensive school, with a sixth form.
- The majority of pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- In September 2015, the head of English, head of modern foreign languages and special educational needs coordinator joined the school.
- Five pupils attend the Linden Centre for alternative provision, and one attends Ashwood.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 34 lessons. They conducted several short visits to classes on different occasions and were accompanied by leaders, including subject leaders, for some of these short visits. Inspectors made a phone call to the Linden Centre, the alternative provision attended by five pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, heads of houses, subject and faculty leaders, a panel of teachers, a panel consisting of newly qualified teachers and pupil teachers, the leader of 16–19 study programmes, representatives from the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and five small groups of pupils from Key Stages 3 and 4, as well as a group of pupils from Key Stage 5. Inspectors made two telephone calls to the leader with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including the school’s records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding records, performance information, development planning, self-evaluation documents, teaching plans for different subjects and policies. Inspectors scrutinised pupils’ work in books. Inspectors also conducted a book scrutiny with senior leaders, in which most of the books belonging to a small sample of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils who needed additional support and more-able pupils were reviewed.
- Inspectors took into account the 314 responses to Parent View and the 83 staff survey responses received as well as 138 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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