

Rydens Enterprise School and Sixth Form College

Hersham Road, Walton-on-Thames KT12 5PY

Inspection dates	8–9 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Following the previous inspection, leaders and governors were too slow in tackling the areas for improvement.
- Governors have been ineffective in holding leaders to account for the school's declining performance over time.
- Statutory requirements for the school's website are not fully met and procedures and practices for updating school policies lack rigour.
- Pupil achievement has fallen since 2013 and was below government floor standards in 2015. Attainment and progress in mathematics and science were significantly below national averages. Progress in key stage 3 remains inadequate.
- Boys, especially those who are disadvantaged, are not making sufficient progress compared to their peers and national expectations. Gaps in their performance are not narrowing quickly enough.
- Staff turnover is high and the quality of teaching is too variable. Teachers do not make sufficient use of available information to support pupils of different abilities.
- The setting of homework is variable. Teachers do not give sufficient helpful feedback so that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.
- In a small number of lessons, low-level disruption limits pupils' progress. Not all pupils take pride in the presentation of their work.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities is not good enough.
- Improvements, following the involvement of The Howard Partnership Trust (THPT), have had too little time to fully impact on teaching and outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Current senior leaders, in conjunction with THPT, have already brought about rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in key stage 4. They have demonstrated their capacity to improve the school.
- Pupils speak highly of the care and support provided by the school. Safeguarding is robust and thorough. Pupils feel safe.
- Sixth form learners feel well supported.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by rapidly improving outcomes by ensuring that:
 - there is a determined focus on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching in mathematics and science as well as across most subjects in key stage 3
 - boys, especially those who are disadvantaged, make sufficient progress in relation to their peers and national expectations
 - the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and disabilities improves to match that of their peers
 - pupils' destinations are rigorously monitored in terms of their progression into further education, employment and training
 - governors challenge leaders more urgently and more often on the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching
 - statutory requirements for the school's website are fully met and school policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - share the effective practice that already exists within the school
 - use available information to plan activities which meet different pupils' needs and starting points
 - have higher expectations of what pupils can do and can achieve
 - eliminate low-level disruption by following the school's behaviour policy
 - support pupils to improve their presentation skills and the quality of their work
 - use homework to consolidate and build on learning in school
 - provide feedback that helps pupils understand what to do to improve their work.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- The new leadership team has already had a noticeable impact in driving short-term improvements. Pupils in key stage 4 are making more rapid progress than they have in previous years and the quality of teaching is improving, although still variable across and within subjects.
- School leaders monitor the impact of pupil premium spending but the gap did not narrow in 2015, although it is expected to do so in 2016. The school is aware that Year 7 catch-up funding is not yet having sufficient impact on the basic skills of those with low English and mathematics attainment.
- There is a genuine passion and commitment among leaders to develop an inclusive learning culture with high expectations for the achievement of all pupils. These aspirations are evident in discussions with senior staff, middle leaders and pupils, who appreciate the support they are now receiving.
- The new leaders and managers have a very secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are open and honest in describing their impact over the very short time they have been in post. Staff felt that the school had improved since the last inspection, especially recently.
- Middle leaders confirm that their roles and responsibilities are now much clearer and they value the support and encouragement received to undertake their jobs. There is a vigour and determination evident across the school.
- Leaders are in the process of introducing a new behaviour policy to build on and extend the successes of the previous one. The policy offers a greater focus on encouraging and promoting a range of British values.
- The leadership of teaching is now improving. Teachers confirm that personalised training and individualised support is helping them to develop their teaching. Staff morale is high and the very large majority of staff who responded to the online questionnaire said they were proud to work at the school.
- The curriculum meets statutory requirements but does not sufficiently support or promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities, as well as assemblies and the tutorial programme, make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Fundamental British values are very well developed in the tutorial sessions but less so elsewhere.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through tutor time and a range of activities but opportunities are often missed during lessons. For example, in a Year 10 lesson on 'Romeo and Juliet', pupils' discussions about love and conflict were not sufficiently developed in spite of their engagement and enthusiasm.
- Leaders are working hard to restore the confidence of parents who have differing views about the school. Feedback from parents is mixed. Many of them are aware of the current changes and look forward to a much stronger partnership with the school.
- There is a supportive working relationship between the school and the local authority, which has provided effective support and ongoing development for the previous leadership and management as well as other staff.
- More recently, The Howard Partnership Trust has provided a range of support for the school including providing new senior and middle leaders and extensive support for staff development and pupil outcomes. In a very short time, THPT has had a measurable impact on improvement across the school, including a clearer understanding of key responsibilities, more determined accountability, raised expectations of teaching and individual support programmes for underperforming staff.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have not been effective in holding leaders to account for the school's declining performance. Since the last inspection they have failed to challenge inflated predictions of pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching.
 - Statutory requirements for the school's website are not fully met. Governors are unclear about procedures and practices for assessing and updating school policies and ensuring that they are all fully compliant and up to date.
 - The governing body does not have a good enough awareness of pupil premium expenditure and how it has been used to benefit pupils in narrowing the gap between their performance and the performance of their peers.

- The governing body does not have sufficient understanding of the management of teachers' performance and whether teachers should receive pay rises based on them meeting appropriate targets.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are effective, robust and meet requirements. Actions to identify and follow up any concerns are thorough and leaders have instilled a culture of vigilance where pupil welfare is actively promoted. Safer recruitment practices are embedded and information is recorded in line with current requirements. A very large majority of parents say their child feels safe at school and pupils are similarly confident about their safety and well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate because there is too much variation across and within subjects. Staff turnover is high, expectations are low and teachers do not make sufficient use of available information to take account of what pupils already know and can do. As a result, pupils do not make the progress that they should and too little has been done to help them catch up with where they should be. In particular, teaching in mathematics and science has resulted in inadequate progress over time.
- Feedback provided to pupils is variable, with the best helping pupils to make useful improvements to their work – but this is rare.
- The use of homework is inconsistent. Pupils said that they had lots of homework from some teachers but none at all from others. They were not aware of any school expectations about homework. Older pupils said that most of their homework was linked to revision. Parents expressed concern over the amount of homework being set.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they have a clear understanding of examination requirements in key stage 4. In modern foreign languages and physical education, pupils are effectively challenged and supported in their learning so that they make better progress.
- Teaching across the school is beginning to improve as a result of recent training and the determined support offered by THPT. Where teaching is most effective, teachers demonstrate an enthusiasm for their subject which engages and enthuses pupils.
- In a minority of lessons, especially those taught by relatively new or supply staff, the level of challenge is too low and pupils are insufficiently engaged. Where this happens, low-level disruption slows the pace of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils speak highly of the care and support given to them by the school and say that they are taught how to keep safe and understand how to stay safe when working online. They understand different forms of bullying and are confident that instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The school actively involves pupils in the disciplinary process and applies, wherever possible, approaches to address any harm done. Pupils confirm that these approaches assist them to resolve any conflict and find a way forward.
- Healthy living is supported effectively through sports and extra-curricular activities as well as in physical education and food technology lessons. The school has developed good links with other post-16 providers so that pupils receive a range of appropriate careers advice and support.
- The few pupils who attend alternative provision are well supported and good relationships between the school and alternative providers ensure that the welfare needs of these pupils are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and enjoy positive and supportive relationships with their teachers and with each other.
- In most lessons, interactions are respectful and supportive. However, in a small number this is not the case and low-level disruption limits pupils' progress.
- Not all pupils take pride in their work. In the work seen, some pupils' presentation was untidy and their work was unfinished.

- The school is working successfully to improve attendance so that absence and persistent absence are now similar to national averages. The school is aware that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities is an area for further improvement. Pupils arrive at school and to their lessons punctually.
- The proportion of exclusions has increased as a result of higher expectations regarding behaviour in the school. Pupils confirm that behaviour is improving and the school is confident that exclusions will decrease in response to the new behaviour policy.
- The behaviour of pupils who attend alternative provision is carefully monitored. It is similar to their peers in school.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Attainment has shown little improvement since the previous inspection and the proportion of pupils gaining five good GCSE passes, with English and mathematics, is significantly below the national average. Examination results in 2015 were particularly poor, especially in mathematics and science.
- In the 2015 GCSE examinations, disadvantaged pupils performed less well than their peers in terms of their average grades as well as the proportion gaining five A* to C passes including English and mathematics.
- In the 2015 GCSE examinations, disadvantaged pupils made less progress than their peers and the gap was widening. Girls made better progress than boys.
- Pupils start in Year 7 with attainment that is in line with the national average. Progress measures in the 2015 GCSE examinations place the school in the bottom 12% of all schools nationally. Progress measures are particularly low for mathematics and science.
- Observations of teaching and learning, assessment information and inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that pupils' outcomes in Year 11 are improving.
- The variability in the quality of teaching means that current achievement in key stage 3 is inadequate in English, mathematics and across the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils are still not making enough progress. Pupils make less progress in key stage 3 than in key stage 4.
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported and make progress in line with their peers.
- The small number of pupils following personalised, part-time courses elsewhere make similar progress to other pupils given their starting points.
- Careers advice and support is allowing increasing numbers of pupils to move on to further education, employment or training but the destinations of a significant numbers of pupils remain unknown.

16 to 19 study programmes

requires improvement

- Leaders of the sixth form are knowledgeable and determined. They make increasing use of available information to track learners' achievement and offer suitable support where necessary. The curriculum is narrow and offers a range of A level courses but few vocational pathways. There is good provision and support for university entry but less support for learners considering employment or apprenticeships.
- Sixth formers appreciate the extra challenge, support and feedback that their teachers provide. They feel well supported in terms of work experience and support for applications to higher education.
- Learners are engaged in a range of activities including fund-raising, school musicals and a trip to Ghana. They act as good role models for younger pupils. Learners' well-being and welfare is well supported and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, but they have little real understanding of radicalisation and extremism.
- In 2015 learners in the sixth form made progress that was below national averages for academic courses but similar to national averages for the small number following vocational courses. Leaders predict that outcomes this year will be similar. Learners in receipt of free school meals do as well as, and sometimes better than, their peers.
- GCSE English and mathematics is offered to those learners who have not yet achieved a pass at grade C or above. The pass rate on these courses was similar to national averages. Destination data shows that under one third of pupils stayed on into the sixth form in 2015, but the number is expected to be much higher in 2016. Destination information on 21 learners who left the sixth form was unknown.
- The school meets the minimum standards for 16–19 study programmes.

School details

Unique reference number	137137
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10012254

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	973
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Doery
Headteacher	Anne-Louise Payne
Telephone number	01932 242 994
Website	www.rydens.surrey.sch.uk
Email address	info@rydens.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 February 2014

Information about this school

- Rydens Enterprise School and Sixth Form College is an average-sized 11–18 school. The school converted to an academy in February 2012 and subsequently entered into a memorandum of understanding with The Howard Partnership Trust (THPT) in April 2016.
- The serving principal retired in April 2016 at the same time as the two deputy principals left. The school has since been led by an executive headteacher and a headteacher provided by THPT. The school is in the process of being rebuilt.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with smaller numbers of 'any other White' background and Bangladeshi heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is in line with the national average. This funding is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after. Thirty-six pupils were eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding for those who did not attain level 4 in either English or mathematics at the end of their primary schooling.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities is below average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- A small number of pupils follow personalised part-time courses at Brooklands College and the North East Surrey Short Stay Schools at Hersham and Staines as well as the Alternative Learning Project.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about key stage 4 results and pupil premium funding on its website.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of pupils' learning in 32 lessons or parts of lessons, including 24 joint observations with senior members of staff. They reviewed the work in pupils' books covering English, mathematics and science, to check attainment, progress, assessment feedback and presentation.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, members of The Howard Partnership Trust and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors held meetings with pupils from all year groups and spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at breaktimes.
- At the time of the inspection, Year 11 pupils and sixth form learners were on study leave so that it was not possible to observe lessons in these years, although opportunities were provided for inspectors to speak with a small number of Year 11 pupils and sixth form learners.
- Inspectors looked at the school's website and a range of school documentation, including safeguarding records, development plans, action plans and governors' minutes. They also looked at the school's attendance, behaviour and exclusions information.
- Inspectors considered the views of 94 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as further written comments provided by parents. They also considered 44 questionnaires completed by members of staff. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire but inspectors saw feedback that had been collected previously by the school.

Inspection team

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