

Twickenham School

Percy Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 6JW

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite the determined leadership of the headteacher, pupils' progress is not consistently strong across all subjects.
- The history of poor provision means that not all pupils reach their potential, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- There is much effective teaching but inconsistencies persist. Improvements are not yet deep-rooted enough for learning to be securely good.
- Teaching does not challenge all pupils consistently enough or deepen their understanding.
- Pupils' attendance is still below the average for schools in England despite steady improvement. This means that some pupils are not able to make the progress they should.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is led with skill and passion. The headteacher inspires staff at all levels to do the very best for pupils and work effectively as a team.
- Effective and consistent management of the school's procedures means that pupils' attitudes are consistently strong.
- Leaders have well-developed systems for checking the quality of the school's work. The capacity of leaders to sustain improvements is very strong.
- The school's work in planning the curriculum has enabled teachers to develop effective methods to assess pupils' achievements.
- Leaders have tackled inadequate teaching decisively and improvements are extremely well led across the school.
- The support of governors, and their incisive questioning of leaders, ensures that improvements are effective.
- Information about pupils' performance is used intelligently to challenge teachers and support their development.
- Many pupils make good progress because they are increasingly well taught. Pupils are highly respectful of their teachers and confident that they are supported well.
- The arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Pupils feel safe in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching across all subjects and year groups, by ensuring that teachers:
 - have suitably high expectations of all pupils
 - challenge pupils' thinking, particularly the most able.
- Improve pupils' achievement, including the progress they make from their different starting points, by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils achieve at the higher levels and reach their potential
 - the achievement of disadvantaged pupils continues to improve so that they catch up with their peers in school and nationally.
- Improve pupils' attendance still further so that it is in line with national expectations for secondary schools.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Twickenham School has improved significantly over the past two years. Low expectations, inadequate outcomes, poor behaviour and a lack of clear structures are being tackled successfully. This demonstrates the dedication and vision of the headteacher, and the commitment of leaders, teachers and governors to high quality. As one parent noted, 'We are absolutely delighted with the changes made at this school since the new headteacher took over.'
- Senior leaders know what still needs to be done to secure better provision. Leaders, especially the headteacher, have steered the school expertly through challenging circumstances, including making hard decisions about the performance of staff. As a result, the school has strong foundations for further improvement. This shows clearly that the capacity for growth is substantial.
- The school has thorough procedures to track pupils' progress and check the quality of teaching. This includes pupils who attend alternative provision. Leaders use this information well to support pupils to catch up with their learning. This is especially noticeable for Year 11 pupils, where poor provision in the past has left them with gaps in their learning. Pupils value the support they get from their teachers and those in Years 9, 10 and 11 said that it had improved considerably over the past few years.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Plans to tackle the weaknesses are thorough and are improving the quality of education pupils receive. Consequently, pupils' personal development is good, teaching is greatly improved and standards are rising.
- The comprehensive shake-up of the curriculum has been a central plank in the school's drive for improvement. By going back to basics, staff have developed a curriculum that provides pupils with a broad range of experiences. It has also helped to define the knowledge and skills that pupils need to tackle examination courses successfully. The impact of this work is increasingly clear. For example, it is dealing successfully with pupils' underachievement as well as supporting teachers and holding them to account for outcomes.
- Strategies for improving teachers' performance are increasingly effective. Through a mixture of effective support and challenge to staff, leaders are able to hold teachers to account for pupils' performance. As a result, teaching quality has improved significantly from a very low base, and pupils' achievement is improving.
- The funds the school receives to support disadvantaged pupils, and those in Year 7 who need to catch up with their peers, is used effectively. The school's actions are helping to improve the achievements of disadvantaged pupils so that there is less of a difference with other pupils nationally. While there is still more to do, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving steadily.
- A wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities enhances pupils' experiences well. Activities include a choice of sports such as football, cricket, basketball, athletics and rock-climbing. In addition, activities such as choir, chess, textiles, dance, science and photography broaden the range further. The school also provides activities to raise

pupils' aspirations such as the recent visit of Year 10 pupils to Oxford University.

- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, including the use of earmarked funding, is now secure. Strong leadership and clear procedures are making a noticeable difference to pupils' outcomes. Again, however, the legacy of poor provision means that the improvements have not yet had time to impact fully.
- The arrangements for careers education ensure that pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. This helps to make sure that nearly all pupils move on to further education, training or employment when they leave Twickenham School.
- Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong partly because of the school's effective policies for behaviour, which staff apply consistently. British values are promoted through the programme of assemblies and in tutor time and pupils are clear about the importance of equal opportunities.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The range of expertise represented on the local governing body is impressive. Governors are tenacious in holding leaders to account for the school's performance and ask exacting and challenging questions. They have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Governors also have a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses gained through regular, structured classroom visits and talking to pupils.
- The range and depth of information that governors receive from leaders enables them to identify accurately the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are rightly supportive of the headteacher's leadership but also realistic about what needs to be done to move the school even further forward.
- Governors are vigilant about safeguarding. The two governors who oversee this aspect of the school's work ensure that procedures are rigorous. For example, they monitor the school's safeguarding records regularly including the checks on the suitability of staff. Governors are suitably trained including, for example, in safer recruitment and in the 'Prevent' programme. As a result, the local governing body carries out its responsibilities effectively and helps to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's procedures and record-keeping are strong. This ensures that the processes to check the suitability of staff are robust. For example, there is detailed documentation about these checks and the school is vigilant in ensuring that all staff are properly vetted to work with children. As a result, the school promotes pupils' welfare and safety well.
- There are suitable up-to-date policies that staff understand and use well. For example, staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse and to whom to report their concerns. Regular training ensures that staff have a clear awareness of the issues around safeguarding, including child sexual exploitation and the 'Prevent' duty.

- Pupils say that the school works well to keep them safe through the citizenship programme and assemblies. Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own survey confirmed that pupils feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement because developments have not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' achievements. While there has been a clear improvement in the quality of teaching, there remain inconsistencies in pupils' learning.
- The standard of work in pupils' books is not consistently high enough, especially for the most able pupils. The large majority of books are well presented. However, teachers' expectations are not always high enough to challenge pupils' thinking. This limits pupils' achievement, particularly that of most-able pupils because they are not deepening their knowledge and understanding as effectively as they might.
- Despite these inconsistencies, there is clear evidence that teaching and learning are improving. Pupils confirm that teaching has improved, especially since the 'new headteacher took over'. The school's information about the quality of teaching also shows that there has been significant improvement. In addition, the school's assessment information indicates that standards are rising. For example, the difference between the achievements of disadvantaged pupils and those of others in England is shrinking. However, the legacy of poor provision means that the impact of this better-quality teaching is not yet feeding its way into improved achievement for all pupils, including the most able.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Classroom routines are well established and teachers manage behaviour effectively. This ensures that the atmosphere in classrooms is positive and focused on learning. Consequently, learning is rarely interrupted by silly behaviour.
- Examples of effective teaching are evident across the school, particularly in dance, drama, physical education (PE) and art where activities grab pupils' interest and motivate them to learn well.
- The school's focus on getting pupils to read regularly and frequently is paying dividends. Pupils read fluently, have an increasingly wide vocabulary and their literacy skills are improving. In mathematics, the revised curriculum is making a clear difference to pupils' proficiency in numeracy.
- The school's work to develop a comprehensive curriculum has gone hand-in-hand with devising clear assessment procedures. As a result, pupils are clear about what is expected of them and know how their learning will be assessed. This work is having an unmistakable impact on teaching quality and pupils' achievements, which are both improving.
- For the most part, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are taught well. Consequently, they make strong progress with their learning. Teachers' plans take account of those pupils who need extra help with their learning and work is often matched well to their needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. As one parent noted, '... there is real pastoral care of all students'. Pupils' self-confidence is improving and they are becoming more aware of how to be a successful learner. This is a result of better teaching and the work to raise parents' and pupils' aspirations.
- The introduction of 'personal development' activities in form time covers issues relating to the safety and welfare of pupils. For example, cyber bullying and e-safety have been recent topics. Radicalisation and extremism are dealt with in assemblies ensuring that pupils are aware of the issues. Pupils said they feel safe in school and know whom to turn to if they have a concern. Parents and carers, too, feel that their children are safe.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being are catered for well. For example, the school employs a school counsellor to whom pupils can turn if they have a problem. As one parent noted, 'Pastoral care is outstanding.'
- Pupils have effective opportunities to influence the school's direction, for example by making their views known through the school council. They feel they are listened to and that their views make a difference. For example, they noted the improvements in the canteen where they said the food is 'good' as a result of their comments.
- Pupils are clear that bullying is rare. They say that on the few occasions when it does happen, teachers deal with it well. The school's records confirm that instances of bullying have reduced. For example, the number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen significantly.
- There are clear opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. Working in the library or older pupils being 'buddies' for those in Year 7 are examples noted by pupils. This develops their personal skills effectively and contributes significantly to the school's positive atmosphere.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- During the inspection, they were unanimous in telling inspectors that behaviour has improved considerably because, as one pupil said, 'the school is stricter'. Pupils expect to work while in school and understand the sanctions system. They move around the school calmly and politely, and, for example, regularly hold doors open for others. This politeness helps to create a positive atmosphere across the school ensuring that little time is lost moving from one classroom to another.
- Break and lunchtimes are also well ordered. Despite the large number of pupils who congregate in the canteen, their behaviour remains strong. They are polite and courteous to each other and treat adults with respect. Pupils respect the school building and there is little litter.
- Although attendance levels are below the average for English schools, they are improving steadily, including the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. This is the result of the school's vigilance in following up unauthorised absence and the focus on rewarding good attendance. For example, in a Year 7 assembly, awards were

given to the form with the highest attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes at the end of Year 11 have been below average over the past two years despite pupils' higher starting points when they joined the school in Year 7. In 2017, the GCSE results were below average and pupils made less progress than in many other schools. There have been improvements in pupils' progress as a result of leaders' successful work to improve teaching and learning. However, the legacy of poor teaching means that too few pupils reach the higher levels, especially those currently in Years 10 and 11.
- Despite this legacy, leaders and teachers have done much to help pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 catch up with their learning. This has been most acute in Year 11. The school's assessment information indicates that standards are rising. However, work in pupils' books suggests that the most able are still not making the progress they should.
- The starting points of pupils in Years 7 and 8 are lower than in previous years, with fewer beginning with higher standards. Nevertheless, enhanced teaching and learning, and early support for those falling behind with their learning, mean that the achievements of younger pupils are improving.
- Disadvantaged pupils are starting to make better progress than previously. The difference between the achievements of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is shrinking. This is the result of better teaching and the way teachers have planned the curriculum to take account of pupils' previous learning. For example, staff visit local primary schools to understand how and what pupils learn in Year 6. They use this information and experience well to help devise the curriculum in Year 7.
- The school's focus on literacy and numeracy is helping to improve achievement in English and mathematics especially lower down the school. This is confirmed by the school's assessment information and visits to classrooms which show standards are improving. Leaders recognise, however, that there is still more to do to improve teaching and learning and iron out remaining inconsistencies.
- Achievement in other subjects varies but there are notable successes in some, including art, dance, PE, drama and history. This is because pupils are interested and motivated to learn in these subjects.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language, are also making improved progress. The school's assessment information and visits to classrooms show that they achieve as well as other pupils in the school.

School details

Unique reference number	143420
Local authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	10047431

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	595
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Claire Little
Headteacher	Assal Ruse
Telephone number	0208 894 4503
Website	www.twickenhamschool.org.uk
Email address	info@twickenhamschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Twickenham School is smaller than the average-sized school in England. The number of pupils at the school has fallen over the past few years. It caters for pupils aged 11 to 16.
- The headteacher took up her appointment in April 2016. Since then, a new senior leadership team has been recruited and around a third of the school staff have left the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive special educational needs support or have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- Very few pupils attend alternative provision on other sites.

- The school is now part of the Richmond West Schools Trust following the break-up of the Learning Schools Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across all year groups and in all subjects. Many visits to classrooms were made jointly with school leaders, including middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work across the range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 7 reading.
- Inspectors looked at behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, governors, the chief executive of the trust, subject leaders and pupils.
- A wide range of documentation and policies was scrutinised which included the school's self-evaluation, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, assessment information and the minutes of the meetings of the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to the quality of teaching and the school's website, including information about extra-curricular activities.
- Records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of 86 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also looked at more than 40 written responses.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Peter Swan	Ofsted Inspector
Geoff Butler	Ofsted Inspector

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