



# Robert May's School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116477  
**LEA** Hampshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 279840  
**Inspection dates** 8 February 2006 to 9 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Sanderson HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	West Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Odiham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Hook RG29 1NA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01256702700
<b>Number on roll</b>	1218	<b>Fax number</b>	01256703012
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Jane Pratt
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Rafter

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 8 February 2006 - 9 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279840
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Robert May's is a large, popular, 11- 16 community school. It serves the villages of Odiham, Hook and Hartley Wintney and surrounding area. Most students are of white British heritage and there are very few from other backgrounds or whose first language is not English. The number of students eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is also below average. The school has specialist science status combined with mathematics and computing.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Robert May's is a good school that provides good value for money. This judgement matches the school's own view of itself. Leadership and management are good and the headteacher gives a clear direction to this inclusive school. Students enter the school with above average standards and by the end of Year 9, standards are well above average in English and mathematics but relatively lower in science. At the end of Year 11, standards are well above the national average. All groups of students achieve well and make good progress because teaching is good. However, there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Monitoring of teaching and learning is in place although the system lacks sufficient rigour to ensure consistency. Students' personal development is outstanding. They have positive attitudes to learning, behave well and attend regularly. The care and guidance provided for students is good, and students feel safe and secure. Parents are very positive about the school and it serves the community well. It has developed very effective links with a wide range of external bodies and institutions which enhance the educational opportunities and welfare of its students. The curriculum is good, varied and interesting and meets the needs of all students. The range of extra curricular activities offered by the school is excellent. The school's specialist status in science combined with mathematics and computing has enabled it to improve aspects of the school environment and resources. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Issues identified at the previous inspection have been addressed and standards have remained high. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and has already identified the most important actions it needs to take to get even better. It is well placed to improve in the future.

### What the school should do to improve further

\* Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.\* Improve the progress students make in science between years 7 and 9.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

When students enter the school in Year 7 their standards are above the national average. By the end of Year 9 standards are well above the national average. This represents good achievement. Standards are highest in English and mathematics and the trends are upwards. The school has identified the relative lower progress made by students in science. In the 2005 GCSE examinations the proportion of students gaining five or more higher grades was well above the national average. The trend has been upwards over the past three years, although in 2005 the school's challenging target was not achieved. Students progress well in lessons and their achievement is good overall. The progress made by boys and girls is similar. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well. Standards are high in English, geography and modern foreign languages. The school has identified subjects where achievement is relatively

lower and is developing appropriate strategies. The school performs a detailed analysis of the outcomes from public examinations. The school's evaluation of this data is accurate and clearly identifies emerging issues.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Students are happy at this school. Attendance rates are high. They get on exceptionally well with their teachers and with each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and well complemented by strong pastoral education. Spiritual awareness is deepened through several enrichment activities such as visits to Auschwitz, temples and art galleries. Respect, courtesy and enjoyment are integral parts of school life. Students play a significant part in local community projects like the playgroup and Cottage Hospital and represent the school on local and national youth councils. Aware of those less fortunate than themselves, they regularly raise funds to sponsor an African child's education and support 'World Vision' in tackling poverty. Physical exercise is encouraged through a host of different outdoor activities. Students enjoyed being involved in choosing the school's catering company and like the healthy eating competitions run by the catering manager. They feel safe, learn to be safety conscious and are proud of the blue flag flying at their school showing commitment to anti-bullying. Students develop good team and leadership qualities through taking on a range of responsibilities on committees, as mentors and in focus groups. This enables them to learn crucial decision making skills in preparation for future careers and their economic well-being. They enthusiastically cite committee and 'Learner's Voice' meetings as bringing about improvement to their learning, and feel that their views are listened to and acted upon.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and some is outstanding. In the best lessons teachers explain their learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson and return to them at the end. As a result students are clear about what they are to learn and know how their learning will be assessed. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes. Because teachers have good subject knowledge and their teaching is interesting, students in almost all lessons work with enthusiasm and sustained concentration. The best teaching is characterised by a brisk pace, well planned activities which meet the needs of all learners and the very effective use of questioning to develop understanding and ensure everyone joins in. Students' behaviour is very good and they enjoy learning because relationships are very positive and the teaching is good. In many lessons there is a real sense of fun and teachers feel confident to use a range of innovative teaching styles. Because of this students are able to learn in a number of ways; they work well together, are able to co-operate and share resources

very well and are also able to organise their own work and take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The school has recently reviewed and modified the curriculum in Years 10 and 11. Students now have the opportunity of following a wider range of relevant vocational subjects. Students appreciate these opportunities and enjoy the time they spend in the local colleges. The school's information indicates that they are doing well but the impact on standards will not be apparent until this year's examination results are published. The school has identified the need to further develop this provision. The school accurately judges the provision for curriculum enrichment as outstanding. There is a wide range of opportunities for overseas trips and other visits. There are many clubs and activities that are well attended by students. The choice is wide ranging and includes many sport-based activities, a choir, robot club and many subject support groups. The personal, social and health education programme is well planned and actively encourages students to lead healthy lives and act in a safe manner. All Year 11 students undertake work experience and Year 9 take part in an enterprise day. Students are well prepared for future careers or education post 16.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care is good. Teachers work hard to ensure that students achieve well. In Years 7 - 9 they understand what level they are working at and how they can improve, but older students are not always clear about their academic targets. Through the structured pastoral system they are guided well in choosing options and making decisions in preparation for future studies or employment. Child protection and risk assessments are in place. Students are emphatic about feeling safe. Students new to the school settle in quickly. Support is given to those with behavioural and emotional needs and with learning difficulties before they come to the school. Care, guidance and support for these students are outstanding. Commitment to inclusion is very strong. Parents say "We are highly fortunate that our son has a place in the Resource Provision offering specialist help, alongside the opportunity to enjoy the full curriculum." Support for vulnerable students is also strong through extensive collaboration with specialists and regular mentoring. As a result they move forward in their studies at the same rate as others with some making better progress. In addition, the school nurse and students, specially trained as mentors, give support to others.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school assesses its leadership and management as good, a view supported by this inspection. The headteacher is very committed to promoting high standards and high

quality education for all students. A clear vision is communicated effectively to staff and this contributes significantly to the quality of provision for students and the good progress they make. Structures are in place for effective day-to-day management and this ensures that the school operates calmly and efficiently. Self evaluation is accurate and takes into account the views of staff, governors, parents and students. Development planning stems from a good understanding of what needs to be improved. Managers have in place systems to monitor the quality of teaching and student learning, however, this monitoring is not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure consistency across the school. Governors understand the strengths of the school well. They want to build on these strengths and improve the school still further. They are involved in monitoring the standards it achieves and provide appropriate challenge as well as support. The school is well regarded by parents and students. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. The school's financial management is secure and budgets are tightly controlled. Accommodation is satisfactory and resources are used very well. Issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed and this good school has the determination and strong capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so welcoming when we came to inspect your school recently. We met and talked with many of you, sat in some of your lessons and looked at work that you had done. We also talked to your teachers and looked at the 240 replies we had to the letter sent to your parents. Now that we have finished the inspection we wanted to let you know our findings.

We judged that your school is good, as many of you and your parents told us. This is because your headteacher and senior staff lead and run the school well. Throughout our time in the school you were helpful, polite and courteous and we were impressed with your very good behaviour and positive attitudes. We learnt that you enjoy school and attend well. We were also pleased to hear that there is little bullying and you feel safe in school. You are very well supported and looked after by your teachers and support staff. Teaching is good and some of the teaching we saw was excellent. These factors help you make good progress in your lessons and achieve good examination results. The school provides you with a good range of courses you can follow in years 10 and 11 and the range of after school clubs and activities is excellent. It was good to see so many of you making the most of these opportunities. One of you we spoke to during our visit said, "We are allowed to have an opinion and reckon we get a good deal here." We agree with this view.

Although your school is already good there are some things that could make it even better. We have asked the school to ensure that those features that make the best lessons successful are found in all lessons. We have also asked them to ensure that the progress you make in science during years 7 to 9 is improved. Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.