



Sir Roger Manwood's School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118900
Local Authority Kent
Inspection number 280427
Inspection dates 23–24 November 2006
Reporting inspector Selwyn Ward

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

Type of school	Grammar (selective)	School address	Manwood Road
School category	Foundation		Sandwich
Age range of pupils	11–18		CT13 9JX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01304 613286
Number on roll (school)	659	Fax number	01304 615336
Number on roll (6th form)	229		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	A Weatherley
		Headteacher	C Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 1999		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–18	23–24 November 2006	280427

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school accepts the top 27% of pupils, which is a broader range of abilities than many other grammar schools. It includes boarding provision for 52 boys and girls, around half of whom come from overseas. This was inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in February 2006. The school has had specialist status as a language college for the past three years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with a number of outstanding features. It turns out confident, well-rounded young people who are exceptionally well equipped for future life. This is because of their excellent personal development and the high academic standards they achieve. Students and their parents strongly value the high quality of education that the school provides. As one of the many very satisfied parents put it, 'From the first day my daughter started, she has felt happy and valued. All of her individual needs have been met and she has been praised and encouraged, achieving a high level of success.' Students throughout the school achieve well as a result of the consistently good teaching and the exceptionally effective care, support and guidance they are given. They benefit from very helpful guidance on how to improve their work, especially at GCSE, although swifter feedback on work in the sixth form would help students make even more rapid progress. Students attain high standards at GCSE and in the sixth form. Standards are also high in the tests students take at the end of Year 9, although students do not do quite as well in English in these tests as they do in mathematics. This is because work in English lessons in Years 7 to 9 is not always as challenging as it could be for the most able.

Language college status has brought a dynamism to the school's excellent curriculum that has helped to broaden students' outlook and their interest in other cultures. Many students choose to join the various clubs on offer that give them the opportunity to sample an unusually wide range of European and Oriental languages. Because many of the boarders come from overseas, they too bring a richness to the culture of the school.

Leadership and management are good. The high expectations of the headteacher and governors have helped to create the school's positive climate for learning and to drive school improvement. The school has a generally accurate picture of its many strengths and of those areas that could be improved. The good improvement since the last inspection shows that the school has a good capacity to build further on its successes.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

This is a good sixth form. Standards are high and students make good progress. Rather more than half the grades attained are A and B grades. Excellent curricular provision meets the aspirations of the students very well. This is enhanced by an exceptionally wide range of sporting and cultural activities which all attract high levels of participation. A strong international ethos pervades the sixth form, in part because of the many different languages on offer, but also because the school welcomes a number of students from abroad, many as boarders. The good teaching, in which expert knowledge is shared and communicated very well, is highly appreciated by students. The quality of discussion is excellent, but progress is constrained by some teachers not picking up on errors quickly enough to prevent misunderstandings arising. Marking in some subjects does not always relate as closely as it could to the marking criteria

of examinations. Students describe how they receive 'as much one-to-one time as needed' and the tutor system ensures regular review of progress is linked to each student's needs and aspirations. The good leadership of the sixth form concentrates strongly on providing opportunities to support excellent personal development. All sixth formers take responsibility within the school, as prefects, mentors for younger students, librarians and many other roles. Full involvement in the life of the school helps students to make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

This inspection confirmed the positive findings of the CSCI inspection earlier this year that the boarding provision offers good care and support to students. The points for action in that report have all been dealt with effectively. Individual needs of students are well known to staff, who offer good support. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with organised activities including attendance at church, social activities, cinema visits and sports coaching. Socially, the students benefit greatly from the mix of several nationalities and they respond very well to the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. Students say how much they value the strong emphasis on academic study. They believe that they make better progress as boarders than they would in other circumstances. They are supported by good facilities, but they would like more access to sporting facilities in the evenings.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work is better matched to students' abilities in English in Years 7 to 9 so that the most able, in particular, are set more challenging work.
- Give sixth form students more immediate feedback on their work so that they are more quickly aware of mistakes or misconceptions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Standards in the tests taken at the end of Year 9 are very high. When they join the school at the start of Year 7, pupils' primary school test scores show that they are typically four terms ahead of the national average. By the end of Year 9, this has risen to the equivalent of eight terms ahead of national. This shows that these able students are achieving very well, although they do not do quite so well in English as they do in other subjects such as mathematics. This is because work in English in Years 7 to 9 is not always as closely matched as it could be to students' different abilities. More able students, in particular, are not always set challenging enough work in these lessons. GCSE results are consistently high and they have been improving year-on-year. Students achieve well. Almost all attain five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics.

This is twice the national average. They do well in most subjects, and particularly so in modern foreign languages. However, in 2005 (the most recent year for which there is data allowing direct comparisons between subjects), they did generally less well in English literature and art and design than in other subjects.

Students make good progress and achieve well in the sixth form. Standards are high at both AS and A level. The number of higher grades fell a little in 2006, but still well over half of the A levels awarded were at A and B grades. Results in the popular government and politics course are amongst the highest in the country. Exceptional progress is also made in history and general studies.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Students feel secure and are confident that the school wants the best for them and they respond with a very high level of commitment. Their behaviour and trust in one another are exemplary. As one student commented, 'You know that if you leave your bag somewhere, everything will still be in it when you go back.' Sixth formers help and look after younger students in a variety of responsible roles. Attendance is good. Students enjoy school and make exceptionally good personal contributions to many of their lessons. They listen attentively and concentrate well, often working together very effectively in teams. This teaches them skills valuable in the workplace and the community. They are particularly well prepared for later life, especially for education after leaving school. Students join in a very wide range of activities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. The rich and successfully developed emphasis on languages and international awareness adds a uniquely valuable dimension to students' spiritual and cultural education. Students are encouraged to stay healthy, through their diet and through participation in an exceptional range of sporting activities. Their commitment to healthy eating is evident in their enthusiastic support for the school's decision to remove vending machines dispensing 'unhealthy food and drink'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teachers' good subject knowledge and generally high expectations promote in-depth discussion in lessons. Lessons are structured well. Effective use is made of demonstration and questioning to engage all students. For example, pupils enjoy games lessons where 'teachers show us how to do it', and being challenged to contribute explanations in mathematics. However, better use could be made of information and communication technology in lessons. For example, interactive

whiteboards are mostly used only as projection screens. Students are eager to learn and they work productively, independently and in collaboration with others. They particularly enjoy friendly competition.

Assessment of students' work is thorough and reported to parents regularly. Students are set ambitious targets and they value the individual support their teachers give them. Students generally know precisely how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve their work, although those in the sixth form would benefit from more immediate feedback. In most subjects, work is well matched to students' abilities. This is not the case, however, in English in Years 7 to 9, where more able students are capable of tackling more challenging work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it is so well matched to learners' academic aspirations. Almost all students progress through the sixth form and into higher education. They are happy that their choices of courses at GCSE, AS and A level are met. For the very small number of students for whom an academic route is not appropriate, alternative provision is made through links with other schools and colleges. Consortium arrangements also offer sixth formers the option of taking some of their courses elsewhere. None take this up, however, because all feel that the options available in the school fully meet their needs. The curriculum is enhanced by an extensive range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, several of which stem from the school's specialist language status and strong international links. Pupils participate enthusiastically in lunchtime and after school clubs. These include orchestra, drama and languages, such as Chinese and Russian, as well as numerous sporting events ranging from basketball to fencing. While provision for students' personal, social and health education is comprehensive, it is not formally structured throughout the school. Students say they would welcome more planned opportunities to discuss issues such as drugs and sex education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

A defining characteristic of the school is the outstanding combination of high academic expectations and very clear guidance. This leads to high standards of achievement and outstanding personal development. Students benefit from accurate guidance about their progress which helps them to reach challenging targets. In most subjects, they know precisely how well they are doing and exactly what they need to do to do better. The school provides very good advice about subject choices for GCSE and for the sixth form, and to guide students' choices of education and training after school. Good child protection measures are well understood by staff and there are very good risk assessment procedures. Students with individual learning needs are identified

early and receive good support as necessary so that they make good progress. All students have ready access to personal help and advice. They especially value the support they receive from sixth form students who themselves gain from the responsibility. Year 11 students enjoy good work experience opportunities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher and governors provide outstanding leadership. They have been successful in maintaining and building on the school's many strengths because they have such high expectations and are, in the words of a governor, 'constantly striving to improve' the care and education of the students. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, not least in the accommodation and physical environment and in the facilities offered by the school. Governors are well informed and take a very active role, alongside the senior leadership team, in monitoring and improving performance. Monitoring by the senior leadership team of teaching and of students' progress is rigorous. It ensures the consistent quality of teaching throughout the school. Monitoring by heads of subject and middle managers is improving but it varies in quality and effectiveness. The school's assessment of its own effectiveness is generally accurate, but there was some variation between its evaluation and the grades given by inspectors. Inspectors did not grade the sixth form quite as highly as the school did, but inspectors gave higher grades than the school for the curriculum; care, guidance and support; and for students' personal development.

Sir Roger Manwood's has forged strong links with other schools, colleges and support services to enhance learning opportunities. It has used its specialist status very effectively by extending the range of languages on offer to its students, those in other schools and the wider community. Opportunities for students' cultural development have improved through imaginative international ties, including those with schools in China and the Gambia.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You are rightly proud of your school. We think it is a good school with some features that are really outstanding.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school:

- You are helped to develop into confident young people who are well prepared for whatever you plan to go on to do when you leave school.
- The good teaching throughout the school helps you to do well and attain high standards in the tests you take in Year 9 and in your GCSE and sixth form examinations.
- You benefit from an outstanding range of subjects and extra-curricular activities that is very well matched to your needs. You particularly enjoy the special opportunities that you have because the school is a language college.
- There are excellent arrangements for your welfare and you are given especially good guidance on how to improve your work.
- The school is very well run. The headteacher and governors, in particular, have helped to maintain and build on the school's success.

These are the things that we think could be better:

- Some of you could be set more challenging work in English in Years 7 to 9.
- In the sixth form, you could make even better progress if you were given quicker feedback on your work so that any mistakes were picked up sooner.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.