



Regents Park Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116450
Local Authority Southampton
Inspection number 290538
Inspection date 19 September 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Green HMI

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

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Type of school | Secondary | School address | King Edward Avenue |
| School category | Community | | Shirley |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 | | Southampton SO16 4GW |
| Gender of pupils | Girls | Telephone number | 02380325444 |
| Number on roll (school) | 916 | Fax number | 02380322411 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Sue Stanek |
| | | Headteacher | Sarah Hill |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 March 2002 | | |

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age group | Inspection date | Inspection number |
| 11–16 | 19 September 2006 | 290538 |

© 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Many of the students come from areas of the city designated as socially and economically deprived and the school is included within the Excellence in Cities programme. The school serves a community from a wide range of backgrounds. About a quarter are of black and minority ethnic heritage and one in four speak English as an additional language. A much higher proportion than average have learning difficulties and disabilities. The number of looked after children is small. The number of students receiving free school meals is about average, though the numbers eligible are higher. The school has a small intake of students from eastern Europe while the proportion of those who enter and leave at times other than the normal term dates is higher than the national average. The school has Training School status and is a specialist Business and Enterprise and Humanities college.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is an outstanding school. The students make outstanding progress and their achievements are well above average. It is led very impressively by its headteacher whose vision for and commitment to the students and community is shared with equal enthusiasm by the staff. They have interpreted enterprise in its widest sense of developing the talents and attitudes of all the students to enable them to develop their independence, own sense of worth, and skills. This is combined with a strong ethical and social awareness. The students are very aware of safety matters and are in full support of the school's efforts to help them adopt healthy habits and lifestyles and contribute positively to the community. Students' personal development and well being are outstanding. The pattern of the school week accommodates a set tutorial session for Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) which is also well integrated in the curriculum and further enhanced by dedicated themed days on, for example, drugs and health awareness. The school works very effectively within its community and in partnership with other schools, colleges and institutions. It has enlisted the support of large international companies who offer business mentoring programmes and work with gifted and talented students.

Teaching and learning are good. The students enjoy their lessons and make very good progress, working positively and productively. Assessment is encouraging and generally shows levels reached by the students but precise improvement targets are not consistently given. Learning support assistants are used well and are respected by staff and students who value their contribution. The system of lesson observations is firmly established and leads to improved teaching and learning by identifying and meeting teachers' training and development needs. The curriculum is outstanding and has been developed in line with the school's specialist status, with a very distinct focus on business and enterprise and a deliberate concentration on numeracy, literacy and citizenship. This provides a wide range of choices for the students who have the opportunity to take examinations early and follow advanced level courses such as English and critical thinking. Care, guidance and support are outstanding with a full range of well developed services such as student support coordinators and mentors. Some older students in mixed age tutor groups are nominated by younger students to act as Form Sisters and they also make a valuable contribution.

The school's assessment of itself is thorough, realistic and accurate. This inspection provided no surprises, confirming the quality and rigour of the school's cycle of monitoring and evaluation, and its impact on improvement and innovation. The leadership team is new but they have been able to implement the school improvement plan effectively through the support of the headteacher and the established system of performance review. The voice of the students is integral to this process with members of the Student Parliament taking part in governing body meetings. Data is well used and analysed by all curriculum teams whose improvement plans are challenged supportively by the leadership team. All the issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Students and parents say that behaviour is good but a very small

number of pupils are sometimes inattentive and cause low level disruption through occasional chattering.

The strength of the leadership team is that it has a very clear and shared focus on students. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction. The school's capacity to improve and its value for money are both outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the marking of students' work includes clear targets which help them know what they have to do to improve.
- Improve levels of concentration for the small group of students who are occasionally inattentive.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Students' achievement is outstanding because they make very rapid progress and reach standards that are above average. The quality of the work produced by students in both academic and practical subjects is very good. The majority enter the school in Year 7 with below average attainment. At the end of Year 9, standards are at or above the national average in mathematics and average in English. At the end of Year 11 the percentage of students achieving five or more GCSE A*-C grades is consistently above average. The proportion achieving higher grades in mathematics and English is also above average. In 2006 almost all the students achieved at least one GCSE pass.

In those subjects where students performed below expectations, the school has carried out a full analysis and put in place effective improvement strategies. It has recognised the weaker comparative performance in English at age 14 and has already begun to tackle this.

The different groups of students such as the minority ethnic students and those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well and make equally good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well being are outstanding. The school is working enthusiastically towards the Healthy Schools Award for 2007. As a result of consultation with the students and their parents only healthy food options are now available in school. Students reported that they feel safe in school and know about how to stay safe. Many have taken up the opportunities to develop their personal skills and make positive contributions by becoming peer mentors and student observers. Attendance has improved in recent years and is now broadly average. The school is working to improve this further with the same vigour and innovation that it has applied in other areas of its work. A good example of innovative practice is how it has trained and used students as observers of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers. Students feel

confident about moving to the next stage of education and rates of progression to further education, training or employment are very high.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school has a very sound system for assessing the quality of teaching and learning and as a result has clearly and openly identified areas where improvements can be made. Its decision to focus on assessment as one of its key priorities is very well founded. Some good strategies are being put in place, such as improving thinking skills and making greater use of student talk and feedback. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons and the advanced skills teachers are working very effectively with staff to improve their teaching. Planning to meet the needs of the different groups of students is good with learning support assistants making well planned contributions in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding in its breadth and the range of opportunities it provides to meet the needs of the students. Gifted and talented students are well catered for through extension activities and an accelerated curriculum in Year 8. Opportunities for enrichment and enterprise education are open to all. Citizenship is well integrated into the curriculum in Key Stage 3. Key Stage 4 students benefit from well established links with local colleges and these provide a good range of vocational choices in areas such as catering and economics, child support and welfare, and health and beauty. Students enjoy an extensive range of extra curricular activities, visits and trips. The after school homework club is well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school that the quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Full attention is given to procedures for safeguarding children and the most recent government advice has been readily adopted. Staff regularly receive full training on health and safety and child protection matters. The student support team have clear roles and responsibilities which ensure close and proactive links between academic and personal support. Exclusions are infrequent because of effective school procedures. Support measures including the student support services team, Form Sisters and peer mentoring are all effective. Students reported that they like the new mixed age tutorial system and the introduction of Form Sisters to 'buddy' and help each other. Enrichment and academic review days are well regarded by the great majority of parents and students.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding, with very clear direction and leadership provided by the headteacher. The leadership team is new but have picked up their responsibilities quickly. Monitoring and analysis of performance data is strong and target setting is realistic. The school's track record of making improvements is impressive. The curriculum leaders who are the middle managers receive good support from the leadership team and are energetic and thorough in planning and reviewing performance of their subject areas. Self evaluation is accurate and comprehensive with a high quality improvement plan arising from the self review. The programme of staff development is excellent and effective. One member of staff commented that 'Continuing Professional Development (CPD) here is much better than anywhere else I have been and it includes all staff'.

The governing body provide good support and are aware of their responsibilities for holding the school to account and setting high standards. They are well informed and give strong support to the headteacher. The school clearly demonstrates its commitment to meeting the needs of all its students in the attitudes of the staff, in the way it takes account of the views of the students and through the range of services it provides.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

| | |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 1 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| 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 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| 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 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 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? | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | 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

I am writing to thank you for your contribution to the recent inspection of your school and to let you have a summary of our findings. My colleague and I enjoyed our day, even though it was very busy. We soon found that you were prepared to talk openly about the school, telling us what you liked and what could be improved. It was clear that most of you like the school a great deal, feel safe and well supported and are proud to attend. Your views and comments were very similar to the responses we received from the questionnaire we sent to your parents, guardians or carers. I outline below our main findings.

- The school is an outstanding school with staff who are enthusiastic and who care greatly about you and your health, development and welfare.
- You make very good progress through the school and it is very committed to developing your talents and giving you the best chances to help you succeed when you leave.
- The school provides an outstanding range of opportunities and offers you excellent care, guidance and support.
- You were very positive about the student parliament and the new house system.
- The teaching is good and you respond positively to encouragement in lessons.
- The leadership of the headteacher and the management of the school are outstanding.

Though the school is outstanding, we have a couple of suggestions, supported by you, about how the school can improve. These are:

- Some teachers should be clearer, when marking your work, about how you can improve and could be more specific about the targets they are asking you to achieve.
- Because some of you, just a few, like to chatter or distract each other when in class, we have suggested that the school deals with this more firmly.

Finally, I would like to wish you well and hope that you continue to enjoy school and make the most of the opportunities offered to you.

Peter Green

Her Majesty's Inspector