

Ruislip High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133625
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	316172
Inspection dates	1 - 2 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Mr Peter McGregor

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

Type of School	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Mills
Headteacher	Mr J Goulborn
Date of previous school inspection	
School address	Sidmouth Drive Ruislip HA4 0BY
Telephone number	01895 464064
Fax number	01895 675331

Age group	11-18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ruislip High opened as a new, purpose-built, co-educational comprehensive school in September 2006. It has 150 students in each of Years 7 and 8. Year by year it is planned to increase in size, to about 900 students aged 11 to 18 in 2012. The catchment area is very local to the school. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals and those for whom English is not their first language are below average. An above average proportion of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has achieved National Healthy School Status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ruislip High is an outstanding school. Extremely popular with parents and students, it provides a first class education in all respects. Students see the school, as one student said, as 'a very friendly place where it's fun to learn and we are all really smart' (in uniform).

Students make excellent progress. They join the school having attained broadly average results in their end of Year 6 national assessments. By the end of Year 7, tests show that standards are well above what is expected for students of this age. This was confirmed by what inspectors observed in lessons and in students' work. A similar picture is apparent in all subjects as a result of highly effective and challenging teaching where only the best the students can achieve is acceptable. Students speak and write with great confidence and skill. They use number accurately and appreciate that different methodologies are acceptable when problem solving. Their knowledge and understanding of science are excellent. Students of all abilities and backgrounds make similarly effective progress.

Students' attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive. They thoroughly enjoy their life at school, and feel they have the respect of staff. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Students appreciate the importance of healthy living, enthusiastically participating in sport and understanding the value of eating well. More than three-quarters eat the excellent school meals. Students know they are very safe in school and report that any bullying problems are solved quickly and effectively, preventing reoccurrence. Students' contribution to their school and local community is excellent. Their confidence in their own capabilities, and skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT (information and communications technology) are preparing them very well for future life.

The quality of teaching is excellent, enabling students to enjoy learning and to be successful. The use of modern technology in many lessons helps and motivates them. Teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm contributes greatly to promoting high standards. They mark work regularly, most with very helpful comments on how to improve further, but this process is not consistently of the highest quality. Almost all students are involved in the outstanding range of enrichment activities, some attending clubs and activities on all five evenings of the week. In addition to the expected range of subjects, the curriculum includes an innovative and much appreciated cultural studies course, comprising religious education, citizenship and personal, social, and health education, taught by specialists. This has an excellent impact on students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pastoral care is excellent. Each morning, before the first lesson, teachers are available for students who wish to speak with them, or vice versa. Students prize highly their tutor time and the general availability of staff. They know the standards of their work, and have exacting targets which challenge and motivate. Progress towards these is checked frequently, and excellent support provided for those not achieving as expected.

Leadership and management are outstanding, driven by the vision of a highly successful school where no student underachieves and all thoroughly enjoy learning. Governors both support and hold to account senior managers, measuring their success against this vision. Staff morale is exceptionally high. Students' work and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored rigorously and senior managers have a clear and accurate picture of what is taking place. All required safeguarding procedures are in place. The high quality new school buildings, and associated facilities, are used most effectively for the benefit of students. Links with parents and a wide range of outside agencies are very strong. The school provides excellent value for money and has outstanding capacity to improve further as it expands.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school has no major points for improvement, but the quality of marking in some subjects is not as high as the very good constructive advice seen in others.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Students' standards are well above expectation as a result of the outstanding progress they make in lessons. The excellent focus on literacy across the curriculum helps reinforce important skills of grammatical accuracy in writing, and how well speech is used. Numeracy and ICT skills are of a similar high quality. Students use the internet with skill and confidence and employ word-processing, spreadsheets and more specialist software in their work to very good effect. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to their peers. Their work is assessed regularly and individuals' progress tracked to ensure that achievement is as it should be. High quality support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, such as in literacy, has a very good impact on their progress across all areas of the curriculum. All students achieve as highly in the whole range of subjects, from physical education to history for example, as they do in English, mathematics and science, because they are so well taught.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are excellent. They particularly enjoy lessons where they have the opportunity to find things out for themselves and to investigate. Students' excellent attendance enables them to make the most of the high quality lessons provided. The student voice is strongly heard through subject focus groups and the democratically elected school council. Their views have led to very successful changes in the way subjects are taught, for example by introducing more active student involvement. Students' excellent behaviour means that lessons progress without interruption. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, stemming from an exceptionally positive, strong and supportive whole-school ethos. They have a growing understanding of their own emotional health through a very effective taught programme. Students apply health and safety understanding in lessons such as science and technology. They take responsibilities very seriously, for example assisting in the learning resource centre and kitchen. Students are challenged by their peers through very effective group and paired work, and develop excellent interpersonal skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Students learn exceptionally well in lessons. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to very good effect in planning lessons that include a very good range of activities such as role play, peer assessment and timed tasks. These are so well tailored to interests and abilities that students are challenged to perform as well as they can. They respond very well to the high expectations teachers have of them, working very hard, with enthusiasm and enjoyment. The

quality of assessment is high, in some subjects outstanding, because most teachers give students very helpful, constructive advice on how to improve, and make excellent use of target-setting processes. Good use is made of National Curriculum level descriptors, translated into student-friendly language, to guide improvements. However, not all teachers write sufficiently frequent and detailed comments on students' work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Students benefit from a broad range of courses which match their needs very well in addition to meeting national requirements. The very enjoyable cultural studies lessons help students to develop team-work and problem solving skills which will serve them well in life, as well as a perspective on their place in British society today. Allocated movement time between lessons enables sessions invariably to start on time. An excellent range of visits enables students to extend their learning experience, for example through field work in geography. The exceptional range of activities includes sporting, musical, cultural and subject-based clubs. The 'chef club' is very popular and successful. The school involves community organisations very effectively, such as the local rugby club. A very high proportion of students take advantage of the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support has a major impact on students' success. Pastoral care and academic support are seamless. The highly committed staff team works extremely hard to create a safe and healthy place for learning. Outside agencies are used very well, especially the local community liaison officers who add an extra dimension to the feeling of safety. Students have great faith in their teachers, and know they can approach any adult in the school when they need help. Students at risk are monitored very effectively. Pastoral management, by staff without a teaching commitment, provides immediate and high quality support, when the need arises, ensuring that learning can continue. Excellent links with parents have been established; information provided helps them to guide their children's learning at home. Individual students' progress is tracked using frequent recorded assessments. One comment represents the students' views that 'every student here has clear targets and we are helped to achieve them'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

All staff share the very clear vision for a highly successful school. Leaders set the highest standards for themselves and for students. The rigorous and accurate monitoring process successfully promotes the sharing of good practice, and challenges any examples of student underperformance. Governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the school. They understand the responsibilities, and the limitations, associated with their roles and carry them out very effectively. Middle leaders with responsibilities for subjects and pastoral care and welfare are highly successful. The school makes excellent use of its resources, including available finance. Trolleys of lap top computers strategically placed around the school, for example, enable teachers to respond quickly and effectively whenever ICT facilities could be helpful to students' learning. The school is developing a very useful network of links with local and national bodies, including community organisations and universities. This is already having a very beneficial impact on the quality of students' educational experience.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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	1

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	1
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

Annex B



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

12 November 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Ruislip High School, Ruislip, HA4 0BY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much.

Your school is providing you with an outstanding education. Many of you, and your parents, pointed out how much you enjoy school, and said that you feel very safe, and are learning to live healthy lives. Your behaviour is excellent. You take responsibilities very seriously, for example as members of the school council, representing your fellow students, and being 'in charge' at the learning resources centre. Your high standards of writing, speaking and listening, number and computer skills and your extremely positive attitudes and confidence are preparing you very well indeed for your future life.

You are making excellent progress in your work, whatever your background or ability, and reach above average standards overall. This is true across subject areas, including the very important ones of English and mathematics. You often make skilful use of the many lap-tops and other computers available to help you learn. Several of you mentioned how well teachers utilise the school's interactive whiteboards to keep your attention by playing video sequences or providing a typed running commentary.

The teaching you receive is excellent, enabling you to enjoy learning and be successful. Your teachers know their subjects very well and like teaching them. They mark your work regularly, often with helpful comments on how to improve further. We have asked the headteacher to check that guidance on how you can improve is written whenever possible on your work. Almost all of you join in the outstanding range of clubs and activities, and appreciate how much is provided. The very good cultural studies course helps you to understand yourselves better and how society works. Staff care for you and look after you exceptionally well. They test what you know and set each of you clear targets, checking regularly whether you are meeting them. Excellent support is given if you are not doing quite as well as you could.

Senior managers, with the help of all staff, and guided by governors, are providing excellent leadership.

Best wishes,

Peter McGregor
Lead inspector