

Teddington School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102925
Local Authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	323715
Inspection dates	14-15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Gale (HMI)

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

Type of School	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jack Stephen
Headteacher	Mr Richard Weeks
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2006
School address	Broom Road Teddington TW11 9PJ
Telephone number	020 8943 0033
Fax number	020 8943 2999

Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Teddington School is larger than the average secondary school. Two thirds of the school population are boys. The majority of students are of White British origin but an increasing, and above average, number come from other backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is below the national average, as is that with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The range includes those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The school works as a specialist visual arts college. Teddington has Investor in Careers accreditation and the Artsmark Silver award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Teddington School provides its students with a good standard of education. Some aspects of its work are outstanding, including the personal development and well-being of its students. This is reflected in the comments of one parent, supported by many others, that 'high expectations of Teddington School have been met by the school's child-centred ethos'. Relationships throughout the school are very positive, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are outstanding. Attendance is improving and above average, behaviour is good, and students report that they really enjoy their education. A major strength of the school is the way it engages students in decision making through opportunities such as the school council, arts status and input into the development of the new school.

An impressive achievement of the effective school leadership and excellent governing body has been the planning and development of a new-build school while addressing areas for improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen, and the school achieved its best ever results for GCSE examinations in 2008. However, this masked underachievement by some groups of lower attaining students. When taken as a whole, achievement was satisfactory in Key Stage 4 last year and good in Key Stage 3. The school has worked hard to refine its tracking and intervention strategies for all groups of students, and current school data, including GCSE module tests, show that all groups of students are currently making good progress in the school.

The school accurately monitors its teaching and learning, and its records, coupled with inspection evidence, show that the quality is consistently good and improving. More lessons than in the past are outstanding, due to effective professional development and careful recruitment. In the few cases where teaching is less effective, it fails to completely meet the needs of all individuals in the class. This can be because either the more able are not challenged sufficiently or lower attainers are not effectively supported. Some parents reported concerns about low-level disruption in these lessons, particularly where temporary staff were deployed. The curriculum is good and evolving. The school's specialist status, its excellent external links, and the prospect of 21st-century learning spaces in the new build, are being harnessed to make it even better. The school is aware that it needs to develop a comprehensive package of alternative provision for students not suited to the very good mainstream curriculum on offer.

In a school where students report feeling very safe, it is unsurprising that the pastoral care is outstanding. Transition arrangements into Year 7 and to post-16 education are very good. An excellent work-related curriculum and the good qualifications that most students achieve prepare them very well for the next stages of education or employment. Academic guidance and intervention is improving, and is starting to focus more effectively on individual students. However, the target setting and review processes through oral and written feedback are still inconsistent, both across and within subject areas.

A parental comment that 'Teddington School has a strong leadership team' is an accurate assessment. Several parents comment on the positive and energetic impact of the headteacher and the way he communicates with them. Most are very supportive of the school's current work and future plans. A few, however, would value the opportunity to be even more closely involved in driving up standards in partnership with the school. There is a clear sense of shared direction and purpose among the staff, and they share a pride in the school with their students. This and excellent work with the school's partners has led to outstanding community cohesion. Many improvements have been made since the last inspection; leaders know their school well and are determined to address areas they know could be even better. This, coupled with the fantastic opportunities offered by a new school, demonstrate good capacity for future improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teaching challenges and supports the full range of learners, so that every student reaches their potential.
- Ensure that target setting, guidance and intervention are focused on individual students, and are consistently effective in raising standards for all.
- Develop a coherent package of accredited alternative provision for the few students who require it.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter Teddington School with standards that are above the national average. The results for the cohort completing their GCSE examinations in 2008 were the best the school has had, with 79% attaining 5 A* to C grades. When English and mathematics are included, 68% of students met the benchmark. However, a number of lower-attaining students, particularly girls in this cohort, made slower than expected progress. Overall, achievement for this year group was satisfactory. School data demonstrates that as a result of rigorous tracking and improving intervention, coupled to more effective teaching, rates of progress are accelerating for all students. Current students are making good progress regardless of gender or ability. Improved teaching and learning are also leading to rising standards in Key Stage 3. The 2008 cohort made good progress, with a larger proportion of the higher levels achieved than in previous years. Predictions for current students in Year 9 show that current students continue to make good progress in Key Stage 3.

Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, when taken as a whole, now make good progress during their time in the school. Those students with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, make the fastest progress, due to the support they receive. Individual circumstance, particularly low rates of attendance, still slows the progress of a few. Effective support for students with English as an additional language means that they make progress in line with their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They have many opportunities to reflect on a wide range of topics through the innovative 'Thought for the Day' programme, and visits to other places of worship and cultural venues. As one parent stated and students agree, 'In general, behaviour at the school is very good. However, there is a small minority who aren't well behaved, which is a shame.' Where behaviour is less good, it is usually exhibited as low-level disruption in lessons. The school is aware of this and working hard to address it. Due to most behaviour being very good, students feel extremely safe in school. Bullying and racist incidents are very rare and are dealt with swiftly and effectively when they do occur. The new pastoral structure, with non-teaching pastoral support managers allied to heads of house, is providing high-quality care and is effective in supporting the few students who find school difficult. This results in relatively small numbers of fixed-term exclusions. Permanent exclusion is very rare. Students exude pride in their school, and this is reflected in the outstanding levels of enjoyment. There are good and improving levels of attendance. Students appreciate how much the school does for them and the wide experiences it gives them. In turn they are very eager to participate in the school and the local community through the active school council, art and sport outreach in primary schools, and courses for local residents. Students have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives because the school ensures that they have many opportunities to access sports, and healthier options are available at lunchtime. Students receive an excellent grounding in social and work-related skills through a vast range of links with local businesses. This, together with a good standard of key skills, gives them an outstanding basis for moving on to the next stage in life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that teaching and learning are good overall. The number of outstanding lessons is increasing because of recent staff training led by specialist subject staff. In most lessons, teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards, with stimulating demonstration and exemplification. In these effective lessons, students often gain further understanding of their progress through carefully managed self- or peer-assessment that helps them to gain insight into the next steps for higher levels of attainment. Excellent relationships generally nurture a very positive learning environment. In some outstanding lessons seen, teachers challenged students to higher levels of thinking and creativity through good pace, skilled questioning and encouragement. In a few lessons where progress is slower, it is usually because the work is not well matched to the full range of individual needs. This can result in an inappropriate level of challenge. In some subjects, students share the tracking of their progress against their targets well, through carefully thought-out assessment and self-evaluation sheets and feedback from teachers. However, there is not yet consistent practice. Students thoroughly enjoy their lessons, particularly the opportunities afforded through group work and the increasing practical activities, which they rightly find 'good fun'. Experimentation with developing technology in the school's 'Pilot Zone' is building student anticipation and raising teacher awareness of what learning could be like in the new buildings.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good and developing curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. Students appreciate an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, and the opportunities to work with the wider community that have evolved as part of the new school build and the visual arts specialism. Teddington has rightly gained national recognition for the way it is building 'clear links between the effective use of information technology and the transformation of learning'. The 'Pilot Zone' and projects with the contractors for the new build provide an interface for students with 21st-century working environments. Similarly, the commissioning of students to create a mosaic at a local hospital and contribute artwork to a royal palace provides exceptional opportunities for gifted and talented students. Many of these experiences innovatively support the work-related and enterprise curricula. The wide range of courses within visual arts provide exciting and stimulating activities for all students, and many students see how the skills, knowledge and understanding gained here help them in many other subjects. More students have chosen to study a modern foreign language than the national benchmark, and the school provides Latin tutoring from Years 8 to 11 so that students can take GCSE. The school has responded gradually to the needs of a few students for whom the normal curriculum model is less suited. However, the development of vocational provision on and off site does not yet cater most effectively for the full range of individual needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding in the school, a fact that is recognised by many parents, one of whom described it as 'a big safety net of pastoral care'. The school puts in excellent levels of social, emotional and behavioural support, utilising not only the expertise of a wide range of outside agencies but also the skills of the pastoral support managers. Students value this extra level of support, and are very secure in the knowledge that they have someone to talk to if they have any concerns. Academic support and guidance are evolving and improving as assessment data are used more effectively to identify individual needs and intervene appropriately. In the past, systems have focused on improving the percentage of students achieving five or more A* to C grades, which has had the biggest impact on higher-attaining students. A recent focus on individual needs is beginning to have more impact on improving the progress of the full range of students. Individual target-setting procedures and feedback on how to improve are developing at different rates across the school. This means that systems are currently inconsistently applied across and within subjects. Transition

arrangements for students joining and graduating from the school are very effective. When students join in Year 7, they settle very quickly. Many parents recognise the efficiency of systems, with one commenting that their child was very happy 'thanks to the impressive management, pedagogical and pastoral support'. Procedures for child protection and to safeguard students are robust.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher gives committed and dynamic leadership to the school. The senior team ably supports him. Clear direction has been set for improvement and is widely shared by a staff group that has a real pride in its school. The support and active participation of the excellent governing body has been crucial in pushing forward the development of the new school build at the same time as improving the performance of the current school. During the last year, the senior team has had a period without its full complement of staff, a situation that has recently been remedied. This has delayed the implementation of some plans, for example vertical tutor groups, but it is a testimony to the dedication of all leaders that so much has been achieved. Since the last inspection, standards have improved both in academic results and in attitudes and behaviour. Middle leaders give thoughtful and effective support to the senior team in developing practice, and sharing with other leaders. However, there is still some inconsistency of practice. The specialist visual arts college status has added richness to the life of the school and supported the rising standards and wider community links. Rigorous and challenging targets set for cohort examination achievement have been met. The school recognises the need for these to be extended to be more specific for different groups of students within the cohort. The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. As one girl in Year 8 from an ethnic minority background said, 'I feel safe here and the boys treat me equally.' Development of community cohesion has been a focus for the school's recent development. It is now outstanding.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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
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.

28 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Teddington School, Teddington, TW11 9PJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when it visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and meeting with you, and were particularly impressed by the pride you take in your school.

These are the main findings of our inspection.

- Teddington School provides you with a good standard of education.
- Standards are rising and you are making good progress.
- The headteacher and other leaders know the school well. They have worked effectively to improve it while also developing plans for your new school.
- An outstandingly cohesive community has developed through the school working together with you and its partners.
- We agree with the headteacher and senior team that most lessons are good, with an increasing proportion that are outstanding.
- The school works exceptionally well with its partners to improve your personal development and well-being; it is now outstanding.
- The school provides you with a good curriculum and effective care, guidance and support.

The inspection team and the headteacher agree that you could achieve even higher standards, and we have asked that:

- all lessons challenge and support your learning so that you always make good progress
- you are helped to consistently know the level you are working at in all subjects, and that marking and other feedback help you to work towards even higher levels
- the school ensures that the curriculum is carefully planned to maximise opportunities for all groups of learners in your wonderful new school.

You can do your part to help by ensuring that you always behave well in lessons and work hard. The team joins me in sending you best wishes for your studies, and we hope that you all do very well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Peter Gale
Her Majesty's Inspector