

The Toyndbee School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116411
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379254
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Raeside HMI

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	970
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Preston (acting)
Headteacher	Matthew Longden
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 June 2009
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The team observed 43 lessons taught by 43 teachers, six of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked closely at its analysis of students' progress and attainment. Meetings were held with groups of students, staff and the acting Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also scrutinised the school improvement plan, policies, a local authority report and records of school improvement work. They considered responses to questionnaires completed by 104 parents and carers, 124 students and 57 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effective the school has been in improving the quality of teaching and learning, including teachers' use of assessment to meet learning needs and to provide advice to students on how to improve their work.
- How effectively the school maximises progress for all students and the impact of interventions to close gaps in achievement between different groups.
- The quality of learning and rates of progress for all students in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of leaders at all levels in driving improvement in provision and outcomes.

Information about the school

The Toynbee School is an average-sized comprehensive school. Most students are White British and a very small proportion speaks English as an additional language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average. The school has special provision for visually impaired students and the majority of statements of special educational needs are for visual impairment. The school has specialist status in humanities, holds the Investors in People Bronze award and International School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The Toynbee School provides a satisfactory and improving standard of education, within a caring and supportive learning environment. Students enjoy coming to school, as can be seen from their high rates of attendance. They say that they feel exceptionally safe there and those parents and carers who returned questionnaires overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe in school. Several commented on the improvements in the school over the last three years. One said that, 'The headteacher has made great strides towards improving the atmosphere and general ethos of the school.' This reflects the harmonious and cohesive school community, in which students of a variety of needs and backgrounds work well together.

Students are well guided and supported throughout each stage of their education. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of arrangements that ensure a smooth transfer from primary to secondary school. One described how anxiety about this step was dispelled on day one at Toynbee: 'He loved it and still does. He is being treated as an individual and respected.' This sense of mutual respect contributes to the good relationships students enjoy with one another and with their teachers. Behaviour around the site and in lessons is good and many students commented on how much it has improved in recent years.

Attainment is improving. The proportion of students attaining the key measure of five or more GCSEs at grade C or higher, including English and mathematics, is 17 percentage points higher than at the time of the last inspection and is now broadly average. English and the humanities specialism are contributing particularly well to the profile of rising attainment, with consistently above average results in the specialist subjects of history, geography and drama. Improvement in other subjects, for example science, has been more variable, such that attainment overall is average. GCSE results in mathematics show a rising trend and are now average. This stems from improved progress, but which is not even for all groups of students and significantly lower than expected for those of average ability. Teaching in mathematics reflects this inconsistent profile and is too variable in quality.

Teaching overall is satisfactory, although it was good in about half of the lessons observed during the inspection. These good lessons indicate how well the school has addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Teachers vary their approach to learning to maintain interest and generate enthusiasm. Lessons plan for the incorporation of literacy skills, group work and varied learning styles. Teachers are less successful, however, in using assessment information to design

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tasks and activities that meet the specific needs of groups and individuals and help them move to the next level of understanding. This includes the use of questioning to probe and challenge thinking, which is variable. Whole-school systems for providing feedback to students and sharing this information with parents and carers are greatly improved, but this is not always well supported by marking and feedback across all subjects, which is uneven in quality.

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has set clear and high expectations of the quality of learning throughout the school. His decision to seek re-designation as a humanities specialist school is effectively drawing on best practice. Middle leaders recognise the particular success of humanities and English in leading improvements in teaching and achievement and work well together to build on this. The school now has a sophisticated grasp of a range of assessment information, which is used effectively to set targets and to monitor progress. Senior and middle leaders are keenly aware that there is more to be done to improve all teachers' use of this information. Plans for further improvement articulate this well and are in the process of being more finely targeted on the learning of individuals and groups. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is therefore good.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in mathematics so that it is consistently good or better and secures equally good progress for all groups of students.
- Raise attainment further and ensure that all groups of students consistently make at least good progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment information, including students' prior attainment, as a starting point for planning lessons
 - tailor tasks and activities to meet the needs of all individuals and groups
 - provide feedback, including marking, that is consistently of a high standard and matches the quality of the best in the school
 - use questioning to probe understanding and challenge students to explain their learning in depth.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Students enjoy lessons and respond with enthusiasm to their learning. From broadly average starting points, they make progress that is satisfactory on balance but good in some subjects and for some groups. In the best lessons, students apply themselves to their learning and can explain their targets and how to reach them. In English, for example, Years 7 and 8 students make good use of tracking sheets to

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identify their own strengths and areas for development. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers overall, although progress is particularly good for visually-impaired students who work diligently both in mainstream lessons and in the dedicated provision. They use additional adults well to support access to learning while developing independence.

Students behave well and movement around the school site is calm. Systems for managing behaviour are well understood and focused on maintaining learning for all. Referrals for unacceptable behaviour are dropping and very low this academic year. Permanent exclusion is rare. Students readily take on additional responsibilities, such as through the Pupil Leadership Team. The very active school council is divided into sub-groups focusing on different priorities, from teaching to marketing. As one student put it, 'It's run really well; they really take our suggestions into account.' The legacy of the school's former sports specialism is still felt in sports leadership roles and in active engagement in a wide range of sporting and other health-related activities. Students have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and a heightened awareness of potential dangers, such as drugs and alcohol through their personal, social and health education. The emphasis placed on the personal and social aspects of learning, such as teamwork and discussion, supports students' readiness for the next stage of their education or for work. Rapidly improving achievement in English makes a strong contribution to basic literacy skills. Students have a strong understanding of right and wrong and think deeply about their own and others' experiences. They speak proudly of their school community as being close but not insular. They show a willingness to learn and think about life in very different contexts, such as in a geography lesson when students watched documentary footage about child labour and considered the true cost of buying cheap trainers.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

2

How effective is the provision?

The best teaching has a visible impact on learning because planning has taken full account of the range of needs within the lesson. Activities are designed to motivate and enthuse students, but also varied to ensure that everyone has the chance to make good progress, whatever their starting points. Teachers make explicit links between the lesson and the assessment criteria, so that students understand how far they have come. There is constant checking of understanding. Expectations are high and pace is brisk. Students are expected to explain what they know and are challenged to think more deeply or to develop more sophisticated answers. Senior and middle leaders are working to develop this good practice throughout the school, but recognise that it is not consistent or embedded across all subjects. Many lessons show elements of good practice but, because the impact on learning is too variable, they remain satisfactory. Similarly, there are some very strong models of assessment, such as in humanities subjects, where marking is regular, developmental and linked to targets. Elsewhere, however, including in mathematics, the quality of assessment is more variable and is not giving students clear enough guidance on how to improve their work.

The school has refined and honed the curriculum so that it meets the needs of all students. Increased personalisation in Year 9 has meant that almost all are allocated their curriculum choices. Those who follow alternative or work-related provision are well guided and benefit from productive partnerships with other institutions. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provides enrichment and is available to all students. Parents and carers were particularly appreciative of this aspect of the school’s provision. One typified this by listing an ‘impressive range’ of activities: ‘My daughter has taken part in music groups; maths competitions; a student leadership conference; a business enterprise hotel challenge; a mock trial; a marine archaeology course; and artwork for the walls of the science department.’

Systems for supporting individual students are strong and effective. Staff work hard to open as many lines of communication as possible to ensure that all students, including the potentially most vulnerable, can succeed in their education. The school makes effective use of a range of external agencies to this end, with notable successes, such as high attendance and the inclusion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in high-profile roles of responsibility.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support

2

How effective are leadership and management?

Parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire commented on a range of aspects of the school’s provision but most frequently mentioned the positive impact of the headteacher on the school. He is described as ‘oozing passion’ for the school, and ‘highly visible’. Parents and carers rightly perceive the headteacher and senior team as having conveyed a clear vision for improvement. Most middle leaders share this vision and understand well their role in driving improvement. Whole-school monitoring and analysis of assessment information is increasingly sophisticated and searching, although the impact of close scrutiny of group achievement is still variable. The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all groups of students and addresses any emerging gaps. For example, boys’ progress previously lagged behind girls’ but accelerated ahead in 2011 as a result of a whole-school focus. Other gaps have been identified but not closed, such as the underachievement of middle-ability students in mathematics.

The current absence of a substantive chair places constraints on the governing body’s capacity to provide strategic direction or rigorous challenge to the school. Interim arrangements ensure that the governing body continues to be well organised and fulfils its statutory duties. Governors understand the school’s strengths and weaknesses and share the headteacher’s vision for improvement. Appropriate and effective systems are in place to secure the safeguarding and protection of students. Staff have a clear understanding of how to spot potential risk and know what action to take if they have concerns. The active parents’ association is highly valued by the school and has raised funds to support learning, for example by refurbishing the theatre. The school communicates with parents and carers in a range of ways, including through the parent portal which allows them to keep abreast of their children’s progress. Regular progress (‘Gap’) reports and academic review days supplement this with more detailed information. A parent of a Year 7 student was ‘impressed to receive comprehensive Gap reports in the first term which were really informative and personal’.

The school makes effective use of partnerships to widen the curriculum offer and to enhance the quality of care and guidance provided to students. It contributes its expertise to the local consortium for 14–19 education, as well as benefiting from others’. Leadership development is supported through links with an outstanding school. Students’ understanding of wider communities is enhanced through a variety of activities, such as the celebration of Black History Month and family military history day. Their participation in the Global Rock Challenge dance and drama event enables them to engage with a wide range of schools, all committed to the initiative’s overarching principle of achieving a ‘drug free high’ through live performance on a professional stage.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A lower-than-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The very large majority of respondents agreed that they were happy overall with their children's experience of school. Those who added comments were particularly appreciative of the work of the headteacher in improving the school. The proportion agreeing that behaviour is well managed was lower than for other questions and this view was carefully tested against the evidence of the inspection. Inspection evidence confirms that, although the school does at times encounter challenge, it deals with this well and has established a dominant culture of good behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Toynbee School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 970 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	51	49	47	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	38	63	61	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	47	45	53	51	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	38	54	52	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	28	27	67	64	6	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	28	65	63	9	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	21	64	62	13	13	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	38	58	56	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	36	35	59	57	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	15	67	64	14	13	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	26	59	57	9	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	51	41	39	6	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	45	43	54	52	5	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



06 December 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of The Toyndbee School, Eastleigh SO53 2PL

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We found it to be an exceptionally safe and very caring environment. You clearly enjoy coming to school and your high attendance demonstrates your commitment to your learning. You told us how the school has improved over the past few years; in particular, you felt that behaviour is much better than in the past. We agree with you that behaviour is good and we appreciated the politeness and courtesy shown to us throughout our visit.

You are well guided through the different stages of your education. Several of your parents and carers commented on how well the school manages the move from primary school. This helps add to your security and sense of belonging, as do your positive attitudes to learning and to one another. You contribute well to your school community by taking on additional responsibilities and by making good use of the support and opportunities provided.

Your lessons have improved since the last time the school was inspected because teachers are planning better and making sure that the content and resources are interesting to you. You do particularly well when this is combined with really good assessment, so that you know exactly how to improve and reach your targets. In subjects like English, geography and history, this works especially well and that is why you make such good progress in these subjects. We have asked the senior teachers to make sure that all lessons are equally good at challenging you all to make better progress, especially in maths, where results have improved but progress is still mixed. We think that Toyndbee is a satisfactory school overall because your achievement is still variable and because we think all teaching needs to be of equally good quality. You can all help by getting fully involved in all of your lessons, asking all teachers for clear advice and guidance on how to improve your work and constantly striving for the highest grades possible.

Yours sincerely

Christine Raeside
Her Majesty's Inspector

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