

# Admiral Lord Nelson School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116476
<b>Local Authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	312330
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Angela Corbett

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1011
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Neil Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Steven Labeledz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Dundas Lane Portsmouth PO3 5XT
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 364 536
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 364 537

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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector currently on secondment to Her Majesty's Inspectorate and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized secondary school was opened in 1995, has occupied its current purpose built accommodation since 1997 and became a specialist school for business and enterprise in 2003. There are significantly more boys in the school than girls and the ratio of boys to girls also varies significantly between year groups. The majority of students are White British, although the number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is rising. There are very few students who are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is below average. Although the percentage of students with statements of educational need is high, the overall percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Investor in People, Gold Artsmark and Stage 2 Investors in Careers.

## 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 that meets the needs of its students well and has effectively raised educational aspirations, with the majority of students moving into further education. Students clearly enjoy coming to Admiral Lord Nelson School and they are proud of its friendly atmosphere, the good facilities and the positive learning environment. The outstanding care, guidance and support have an impact on the success of every individual student and make this a very inclusive school. As a result, their personal development is outstanding. Students feel safe in school, they show respect for each other and make the most of the many and varied opportunities offered both in and out of school time. The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school and the many opportunities that it offers. One parent commented 'the school offers an excellent level of education and superb after school activities' whilst another said 'I am proud that my child attends the school'.

Students make good progress overall and by the end of Key Stage 4 they achieve standards that are in line or above national averages. The percentage of students achieving five or more A\*-C with English and mathematics is above the national average. Currently, students are entered a year early for Key Stage 3 national tests, allowing them more time for their GCSE courses as well as additional learning opportunities and for the most able to achieve at AS level. Work observed during the inspection and the school's monitoring and tracking procedures show that current students are making good progress against their targets.

The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher is well respected and dedicated to the school. He has effectively developed and strengthened management at both senior and middle levels. There is a shared vision for the future development of the school and managers are enthusiastic in their commitment to lead new initiatives. For example, a highly effective system for using data to monitor student progress and raise attainment is now used across the school. The focus on student achievement and their personal development shines through and actions are carefully targeted for the benefit all learners. Managers at all levels are involved in school improvement plans through satisfactory self-evaluation. This all demonstrates that the school's capacity to improve is good.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Students have positive attitudes to learning and make the most of opportunities to work independently or in groups. Students make best progress when lessons are well paced, provide clear learning focus and time for reflection and evaluation. However, there is some inconsistency across the school in how well assessment data, tasks, resources and learning outcomes are matched to the differing needs of groups and individual students within lessons. The curriculum is a strength of the school. It is innovative, regularly reviewed and tailored to the needs of each year group and individuals.

The school's designation as a business and enterprise college is having a positive impact on enriching the curriculum, with numerous activities based on enterprise within lessons, through themed days and extracurricular activities. For example, working in groups, Year 10 took part in an enterprise project lead by Portsmouth University to create and promote their own island. Such activities have also strengthened the school's promotion of pupils' future economic well-being and have increased the ways in which they contribute to the community. In addition, the specialist status has enabled the school to form a wide and growing range of very good working partnerships. Many of these are contributing very positively to students' personal development and well-being. However, there has been some diversion from some of the original

business and enterprise college aims; this has been in response to the changing needs of learners, the local community and management of the school. With the exception of formal religious education teaching at Key Stage 4, the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The school is providing good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that planning for teaching is consistently linked to what students will learn, matching tasks and resources to better meet their individual needs.
- Ensure that statutory requirements are met for religious education at Key Stage 4.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievements and standards reached by the students over their time in the school are good. Students join the school with broadly national average levels of ability. All students are now entered a year early for Key Stage 3 national tests and as a consequence results in the core subjects are below national average point scores. In these tests there are no significant differences between girls and boys or for different groups of students. On the basis of work seen in this inspection, levels of achievement and progress are judged to be satisfactory over the three years normally allocated to work at Key Stage 3. However, the school recognises that there has been a downward trend in results and is effectively working to address this. The current early entry policy for Key Stage 3 allows students more time to follow subsequent GCSE courses and overall achievement in 2007 in these examinations, based on average point scores, was significantly above the national average and has recovered from the dip of 2006. Girls have higher levels of attainment than boys and students with learning difficulties and disabilities also do well relative to national data. Gifted and talented students have the opportunity to take some GCSE examinations in Year 10 which gives opportunity for further courses, including AS levels, to be studied. By the end of Key Stage 4 all students have made good progress overall in relation to their starting points and are well placed to move into further education or training. Students make outstanding progress in media studies and drama. The school's specialist status has enabled enhanced monitoring of students to be introduced which has led to good progress being made towards the targets set for the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Students clearly enjoy their education. Their attendance is very good and their punctuality to school and lessons is excellent. Behaviour around school is excellent and they work together harmoniously in lessons. This is achieved through the effective systems that manage and monitor behaviour and create a positive culture that celebrates students' achievements. Very effective systems identify individual students' needs, monitor their attainment, and track their progress. This information is then highly analysed to tailor personalised support to students who are not achieving their best and has significantly reduced the number of student exclusions. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is developed through teaching as well as assemblies and special events that focus on issues such as human rights and world development. These carefully planned and rich experiences help students to become reflective and thoughtful of others. For example, students show their concern for others through their charity work that includes sponsorship of a school in Africa and older students successfully act as buddies to mentor and bond with younger students to form a cohesive community. Students

feel safe in school. Students reported that bullying was rare, but they spoke confidently about receiving appropriate help and support should it occur. They are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles and take full advantage of the many extra curricular sporting opportunities. Students have a strong influence on the working of the school through the regular meetings of the school council. Their views have helped to steer changes in the school catering, and tackle ethical issues of recycling and Fair Trade. The pioneering curriculum enrichment programme in years 7 to 9 replaces homework, helps to equip younger students with study-skills that are critical to successful 14–19 education and life long learning. However, a few parents would prefer more traditional homework tasks. For older students excellent focus on key skills, independent learning and high aspirations prepare them extremely well for their future life beyond school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are monitored well and the school also makes an important contribution to teacher training. Although some teachers are inexperienced and a small number are working outside their area of subject expertise, overall teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, manage students well and promote good relationships in the classroom. There is some inconsistency in the matching of resources, tasks and learning objectives to the needs of students in mixed ability groups and planning is not clear enough about what students should be able to do at the end of the lesson. Plans are sometimes a list of activities rather than providing clear learning objectives. In the most effective lessons, learning is well paced with time for reflection and evaluation. Students have opportunities to work independently, in pairs and groups and they themselves contribute to the high quality of the learning.

Provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those with identified gifts and talents is good. Some classrooms are very crowded and access to information and communication technology (ICT) is limited but teachers make good use of available resources. Learning is continued after school in subject based study support and through the developing web site and virtual learning environment. These are enhancing student independence and aspiration. The school has a clear focus on assessment for learning and questioning is often very effective in checking understanding and taking learning forward. Marking is inconsistent and although students feel that they are given good guidance on how to improve assessment data is not always used effectively in planning activities and setting targets. There are some good opportunities for individuals to assess their own and others work but this is not consistent across the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has genuine breadth and is enhanced by the emphasis on enterprise education. Planning and evaluation ensure that provision for encouraging life long learning, citizenship and personal development is an area of real strength. Religious education is not being formally taught to all students in Key Stage 4 and citizenship is reported on but not formally assessed. There are timetable issues, for example in English and humanities that result in shared classes and an uneven pattern of lessons across the week. Years 7 and 8 follow a condensed curriculum and this provides opportunities for choice and longer time for study at Key Stage 4. A good

range of subjects is available at GCSE including some vocational options and appropriate business and ICT based courses but these are not especially popular with students. Older students can choose from a range of AS courses including film studies and able and gifted and talented students have many enrichment opportunities. Provision is strengthened by the school's specialist status and strong links with business and industry greatly enhance student experience. The curriculum provides really valuable insights into the world of work via enterprise days and work placements. Students are well prepared for embarking on higher-level courses or training. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities, clubs, trips and visits is outstanding as is the level of student participation.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The combined elements of care, guidance and support make an outstanding impact on the success of every individual. They are quite rightly held in high repute by students and parents, and help to create a very inclusive school. Academic mentoring days are now helping students set targets and share aspirations with parents. Excellent guidance and appropriate intervention supports all students on their journey through the school. Students are competitive and are keen to achieve their names on the 'top 100' list. Strong leadership ensures that the school fully considers the many different strategies that are available before personalising intervention and support plans for students. This maximises their effectiveness. Transition arrangements between previous stages of education and 14-19 education are very good, almost all students proceeding to further education or employment. Students are offered very good advice when making important choices about their study routes. Year 11 students spoke highly of the advice they had been given, 'really helpful guidance - before it was bewildering'. The school has rigorous checks and systems to ensure that child protection matters are fully compliant. Health and safety in and around the school is constantly monitored and frequently reviewed. Staff are given appropriate training, including very specialised training for some learning assistants to very effectively support students' with specific and complex learning needs. This ensures that the most vulnerable students make good progress with their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's very good leadership has empowered the development of increasingly strong leadership at all levels and provided a shared vision for the school. The senior executive team have developed into an effective unit and are well supported by the wider senior team and other middle managers. The school has very effectively developed and broadened the roles and responsibilities of all staff to support student achievement and personal development. Leaders at all levels commented on how capacity for change has developed, and that they are now able to lead new initiatives both within departments and across the school. The improvement in the use of data is focusing staff on students' progress in the drive to raise standards and meet challenging targets, although this still needs to be more consistent at classroom level. Managers at all levels are held clearly to account through annual reviews and self-evaluation procedures. The school's evaluation of its work is largely accurate, but is often more descriptive than evaluative. The school has appropriately identified four priorities for school development and managers at all levels effectively use these to contribute to the school improvement plan, which does not always

provide measurable success criteria and interim milestones. The well-informed governing body has been strengthened and expertise broadened to provide better support and challenge to the school. Finances and resources are well managed. The school makes very good use of the expertise of a wide range of external agencies to enhance students' well-being. Through the specialist status in business and enterprise and good community partnerships a wide range of services are provided for both school members, their families and the local community.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2
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	1
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 the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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	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

11 March 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Admiral Lord Nelson School, Portsmouth, PO3 5XT

We enjoyed the time we spent in Admiral Lord Nelson School on our recent visit. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us in meetings, lessons and around the school. We think that Admiral Lord Nelson School is a good school that is successfully meeting the needs of its students.

We hope that you will take the time to read the full report but I have highlighted the key points below:

- you enjoy school and you are justifiably proud of your school
- you show respect for your headteacher, the staff and each other
- the school's examination results at Key Stage 4 are above the national average and you make good progress during your time at the school
- teaching is good but in some lessons tasks and resources could be better suited to your individual needs
- excellent systems are in place to track your progress and you are offered very good help and support when it is needed
- your level of attendance at school is very good and your punctuality for school and lessons is excellent
- you make the most of the wide range of activities, events and trips that are provided to help you develop both personally and academically
- you are very well prepared for the next stage of your education and the world of work, particularly by the many opportunities that arise from the business and enterprise specialist status.

To improve things further, we have asked the school to:

- ensure that planning for teaching is consistently linked to what you will learn matching tasks and resources to better match your individual needs
- ensure that statutory requirements are met for religious education at Key Stage 4.

You can help by keeping focused on your learning both in and out of lessons and continuing to make the most of the wide variety of opportunities offered.

With best wishes

Angela Corbett

Lead Inspector