Electronic Supplementary Material (ESI) for Journal of Materials Chemistry B. This journal is © The Royal Society of Chemistry 2014



**Fig. S1** Confocal microscopy images showing cellular uptake profile of PgSHAs. PC-3 cells were treated with RITC-labeled PgSHAs (red) with or without 1% HA. After incubation for different time, the nuclei of cells were stained using DAPI (blue). The cells uptaking the PgSHAs were then visualized with fixed excitation wavelength, light intensity and exposure time.



**Fig. S2** The *in vivo* NIR fluorescence images of CL-1 tumor-bearing mice after *i.v.* injection of free DiR (Control 1 and 2) or DiR-loaded PgSHAs (Test 1 and 2). The sites of tumors are indicated by arrows. Non-specific distribution and fast elimination of free DiR in control group caused a weaker DiR signal compared with that of test group, so that DiR signal was hardly seen in control group when the background was reduced to the same level.



Fig.S3 The *ex vivo* NIR fluorescence images of tumors and organs harvested at 96 h after injection of free DiR (control 1 and 2) or DiR-loaded PgSHAs (test 1 and 2).



Fig.S4 The relative fluorescence intensities of tumor to liver (\*p<0.05 between two groups), tumor to spleen and tumor to lung (\*\*\*p<0.001 between two groups). Data are presented as mean $\pm$ SD (n=4).