

Marshalls Park School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	102345
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	376701
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Peter McGregor

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	832
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geoffrey Starns
Headteacher	Pamela Mason
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 November 2008
School address	Pettits Lane Romford RM1 4EH
Telephone number	01708 724134
Fax number	01708 746021
Email address	contact@marshallspark.havering.sch.uk

Age group	11–16
Inspection date(s)	18–19 January
Inspection number	376701



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
 Textphone: 0161 618 8524
 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Peter McGregor

Additional inspector

Jennifer Barker

Additional inspector

James Coyle

Additional inspector

John Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. In approximately 20 hours of lesson observation, inspectors observed 38 lessons, taught by 38 teachers. They had discussions with a sample of governors, students, parents and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at development and curriculum planning, tracking data, policies and student and staff questionnaire responses. They also analysed the views of 209 parents and carers, as reflected in their responses to a questionnaire about the school.

Information about the school

Marshalls Park is a below average-sized secondary school, with fewer girls than boys. The school meets current government floor standard. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most students are White British, with around a tenth coming from several minority ethnic groups. There are an average proportion of disabled students and students with special educational needs, including autistic spectrum disorder. For very few students, English is an additional language. The school was re-awarded specialist performing arts status in 2009. There is an onsite private nursery, not managed by the governing body, which was not part of this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Marshalls Park is a satisfactory school. Significant improvements are being made in the quality of teaching and students’ achievement.
- Students are safe and behave well over time. This was apparent in school records, observed lessons and in students’ conduct around the school. Students in discussions and in their questionnaire responses were very positive about behaviour in the school and say they feel safe. A small minority of parents believe there is too much misbehaviour.
- Achievement is satisfactory and improving. The school’s detailed and useful tracking data on each student shows clearly that much better progress is being made this year, building on their average starting points on entry to the school.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Through rigorous and effective monitoring and support, it is improving. Good relationships between students and between students and staff, good teacher subject knowledge and focused intervention for students falling behind in their learning are raising attainment. Teaching and learning in drama are models of excellent practice.
- Not all work is well matched to students’ prior learning; the frequency of marking and assessment is inconsistent across subjects and students are not always guided on how they can make further improvements. The promotion of students’ literacy has insufficient focus and homework is infrequent for some classes.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, supported by a strong senior team and effective governors, is driving the school forward.
- School improvement planning is guiding developments. The well-planned curriculum makes a strong contribution to students’ achievements.
- The school effectively promotes students’ personal development, which results in a positive, inclusive school environment where staff and students work very well together.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement through improved teaching and learning, focusing on:
 - matching work better to the wide-ranging needs of students in classes
 - assessing students' work more effectively by marking more regularly, explaining how it can be improved and checking that this is done
 - setting and marking homework with appropriate frequency in all subjects
 - ensuring that the teaching of literacy is central to all subjects, providing more opportunities for extended writing.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The school has responded well to attainment and value-added data which indicated underachievement in 2011 in modern foreign languages and humanities in particular. Robust constructive criticism of teaching techniques is resulting in students making better progress. In virtually all lessons observed, students' achievement was satisfactory or better, with a majority where it was good. Students listen well and happily respond to questions when asked. Where extended answers are expected, students in these lessons grow in confidence and learn how to express themselves. Written work is satisfactory, but of a lower standard than students' oracy, and not always completed in the case of lower-attaining or less-motivated students. Inconsistency in what teachers find acceptable results in some students giving a high priority to presentation of work while others make less effort.

In humanities subjects, progress is satisfactory and improving, as identified areas of weakness are resolved, such as coursework and teaching quality. Following a modern foreign languages inspection during the last academic year, which identified satisfactory achievement, further progress has been made. Students currently taking a modern language in Years 10 and 11 have opted to do so, whereas previously high attainers were directed into the area. This has raised motivation and achievement. The school has detailed information of the progress being made currently by students known to be eligible for free school meals, and by groups of students who were lower attaining on entry in mathematics or higher attaining in English. These groups underachieved, relative to their peers, in 2011 GCSE examinations. Now, through supportive intervention, the gap between their progress and that of other students is narrowing considerably. The same picture is true for students with disabilities or with special educational needs. Although not all staff intervene in lessons as often as they could to assure their progress, the school's traffic-lighted tracking system, which identifies individual students' progress as appropriate or otherwise, results in additional successful support so that achievements are at least satisfactory.

Attainment is at least average, showing the impact of the school in making improvements. Almost all parents and carers say that their children make good progress at school, and that they develop good skills in speaking, reading, writing

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

and mathematics. Inspection evidence is that progress and achievement are satisfactory and improving.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory or better in virtually all lessons because teachers explain ideas and concepts well using their strong subject knowledge. Good relationships between teachers and students result in good communication. In an outstanding drama lesson seen during the inspection, group work was planned with great care so that all excelled, including students with autistic spectrum disorder. Students understood the clear targets as they developed scenes for a performance, working, for example, as the narrator or in the chorus. A calm working atmosphere where students reflected on their learning led to excellent progress for all. In a design and technology lesson, a similar level of engagement was apparent as students practised making joints in wood, and designed boxes with different degrees of difficulty to meet students' needs. Students with disabilities were well supported and made good progress. A high-attaining mathematics class worked hard from the start of the lesson as challenging algebra and number work led on to trigonometry. Good teacher explanations, and student engagement through paired discussion and self-review led to effective progress. In lessons such as these, where student involvement and learning behaviour were good, the positive atmosphere successfully promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as subject learning.

Where teaching was satisfactory, rather than good, this was often distinguished by a lack of matching work to the needs of students in the class. In discussing teaching and their learning, students made the point that off-task chatter happened when they were asked to 'wait for others to catch up' or when 'work was difficult to do and teachers did not know you did not get it'. Some students' books are very well marked, with errors corrected and excellent guidance on how to improve. Students were pleased with the extent of oral feedback on their work provided by staff during lessons. In some books, however, written work has not been marked for substantial periods of time and comments are sometimes difficult to read and do not indicate how to improve. The school has an appropriate curriculum drive on improving students' literacy but not all staff follow the school strategies consistently so that the quality of students' written work and the teaching of key words and phrases receive insufficient emphasis.

Students believe teaching is good, as do parents. Inspection evidence indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall. A minority of parents mentioned that their children's lessons were interrupted by bad behaviour. Students' views, confirmed by the experience of inspectors, are that teachers do not tolerate any serious misbehaviour and it is only occasionally that off-task chatter or inattention result when teaching is less focused on meeting individual needs.

In some subjects, appropriate homework is set and marked regularly. Lower-school students find project-based tasks motivational. Good use is made of the internet to set homework, particularly for the older students. For those without access to

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

computers at home, after-school sessions using the school's technology are available, ensuring equality of opportunity for all. In a number of subjects, homework tasks are not always appropriate and set infrequently. Students' planners, where homework set should be recorded, are not completed systematically. Monitoring is not rigorous enough to ensure that school policies are being followed consistently.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The headteacher and senior leaders see misbehaviour as associated with teaching weaknesses, not as an issue in itself. This constructive approach, with clear sanctions when problems do arise, is steadily reducing the few incidents of inappropriate behaviour and the number of exclusions over time. Students are placed in the school's own exclusion unit when serious incidents arise, where work is set and they can reflect on what has taken place. A few older students who had attended this unit remarked that they had learnt from the experience and now, following a curriculum that interested them, they usually behaved well, wanting to succeed in their studies. There are repeat offenders and very occasionally students' actions result in the school requesting managed moves to other schools but every effort is made to resolve problems within the school. The school's learning log of incidents is reviewed daily to ensure that immediate action is taken as needed. The school is aware that a higher proportion of students entitled to free school meals are excluded than others. Support staff are focusing on their individual needs, and the positive outcome of this intervention is already being seen.

Parents and carers are very positive about the way the school looks after their children and that they feel safe. A small minority refer to bullying incidents which go unresolved. Students' conduct, as observed, is almost always appropriate in lessons and around the school, a view supported by students in their questionnaire responses and in discussions. The small number of incidents of bullying and racism are recorded with care, as are the effective steps taken to resolve situations. The school makes strenuous efforts to raise students' awareness of different types of bullying, such as recent sessions on cyber-bullying. Attendance is improving steadily and has done so for the past three years. Current attendance is above average, with reduced persistent absence. Punctuality to school in the morning and to lessons is also good, reflecting the positive approach of most students to the ethos of the school.

The change in the role of year leaders from behaviour managers to managers of students' learning, using tracking boards and individual 'flight paths' for each student in their year, has been beneficial. It has helped to establish an environment where improved behaviour is achieved through the provision of effective teaching and a good curriculum. Tutor time provides a good opportunity for students to meet together socially each morning but time is not always used effectively and behaviour is not as good in these sessions as at other times.

Leadership and management

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

The governing body has a good understanding of what takes place in the school. The Chair meets regularly with the senior leadership team, holding them to account for key performance indicators identified in the school improvement plan. From its own observations and analysis, as well as reports received from the headteacher and external monitors, the governing body knows that students' behaviour is good. It supports the drive to improve teaching and learning through continuing professional development, which is already having a significant impact. The most successful teachers are identified as coaches. Where teaching is not of an appropriate quality, the headteacher takes robust action. The school promotes equality of opportunity for all effectively and tackles any discrimination rigorously. The school's safeguarding systems are appropriate; students' welfare and safety have the highest priority.

The curriculum is a key strength. The performing arts are strong, including dance for all lower-school classes, reflecting the school's specialist status. The English Baccalaureate has been carefully explained to parents and carers with the result that, within the free option choice in Year 9 for Year 10, more students are selecting a balanced academic curriculum. This is most apparent in modern languages and humanities, where more students are opting for these GCSE courses. The school offers vocational pathways involving off-site provision and carefully timetables additional lessons on days when students are in school to ensure that they do not fall behind. Early entry at GCSE in English and mathematics has improved student motivation and achievement and has been extended to involve as many students as possible. Students benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities in areas such as sport, drama and music, and through a range of revision and guidance programmes. Staff readily make themselves available to support students out of lesson times.

Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Students are confident and attend school happily. They become thoughtful learners, through 'learning to learn' lessons, and when teachers provide opportunities for reflection on broader issues. Students develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong as they move through the school and learn from visits, such as the annual Auschwitz trip. Students of all backgrounds get on well together because the school ethos effectively promotes tolerance and understanding.

The school's capacity to improve is strong, as seen in the effective action the headteacher and her team have taken and continue to take to improve teaching and learning and to narrow the gaps in achievement of different groups. Self-evaluation is accurate and helpful. Data analysis is thorough and middle leaders use this information well to provide focused support for those with the greatest needs. The outcome of this work is seen already in improved achievements and higher attainment, better attendance and lower numbers of exclusions.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

20 January 2012

Dear Students



Inspection of Marshalls Park School, Romford, RM1 4EH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited Marshalls Park and for helping us to get to know your school, particularly through your questionnaire responses and discussions. It was good to hear how positive you are about all aspects of school life.

We found that your school is satisfactory and improving. Teaching is satisfactory, as are your achievements and you are on track to do better this year. Your attainment is average overall and higher in some subjects. Your attendance has improved steadily over recent years and is now good. You are punctual to school and to lessons and behave well. You told us that you feel completely safe at school. You get on well together and have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Bullying and misbehaviour do happen occasionally but you told us you are confident that the staff always resolve these problems quickly and thoroughly. Your teachers regularly check how well you are getting on and provide helpful support if you are falling behind. The headteacher, the governing body and senior leaders are ambitious for the school.

We have asked the headteacher to continue improving the school by making sure that:

- work is matched better to your needs
- your work is marked more regularly, with advice on how it can be improved and checks made that these improvements take place
- the right amount of homework is set and marked
- you have more opportunities to carry out extended writing.

You can help too, by carrying on with the hard work we saw during the inspection and supporting each other to achieve even more.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**