

Sedgehill School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100743
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354881
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2010
Reporting inspector	John Daniell 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1538
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara James
Headteacher	Mr K Mackenzie & Mr D Dickens (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 47 lessons taught by 46 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, local authority representatives, staff and students. Discussions also took place with parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including policies, self-evaluation information, performance data, school improvement plans, reports and reviews from the local authority as well as those from the School Improvement Partner. The inspection team scrutinised 123 questionnaires from parents and carers, 124 from students and 26 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. The following areas were looked at in detail:

- the level of students' achievement in mathematics
- the consistency of the quality of teaching and learning across age groups and subject areas
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in driving sustained improvement was evaluated
- the effectiveness of provision in the sixth form in meeting students' needs and interests was assessed.

Information about the school

Sedgemoor School is larger than the average-sized secondary school with specialist performing arts status. There is an attached unit for deaf students. The school is currently led by two joint acting headteachers following the resignation of the headteacher in September 2010.

The school has considerably more boys than girls and the number of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above the national average, as is the percentage of students who speak English as an additional language. Around 40% of the students are from a White British background with about 20% of Black Caribbean heritage. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average, but the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to students' achievement, particularly in mathematics.

Some important features of the school are good. It is an orderly and supportive community, which is well regarded by most parents and carers, and has a strong commitment to the personal development of students and to their welfare, guidance and support. However, important aspects of students' achievement are inadequate. Low attainment in mathematics, as a result of inadequate learning and progress for the last three years, has led to underachievement. Progress made in addressing this matter, which was identified in the previous inspection report and in a survey visit in January 2010, has been too slow. Although there are some signs of improvement, it is too early to judge the full impact of the changes being implemented.

The quality of teaching and learning is currently satisfactory overall. There is some good and outstanding practice, but too much inadequate teaching holds back students' learning and progress. Although teachers display good subject knowledge, they do not always have high enough expectations of what students can achieve. This is because assessment information is not used consistently well in the planning and delivery of lessons. The inspection team saw better progress being made in the specialist arts subjects, although such good practice has yet to be effectively shared with other subject areas.

The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. The quality of care, guidance and support in the sixth form is a strength. The school's decision to break away from its federation arrangement for students in Year 12 has led to a careful review of the curriculum to make sure that it meets their needs fully. The use of data in the sixth form is more rigorous than elsewhere and achievement is satisfactory.

The new, purpose-built, secure school accommodation helps ensure students are safe on a daily basis. The learning environment is enhanced by very good teaching and learning resources, including good information and communication technology equipment and a well-equipped learning resource centre. The good provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, coupled with the effectiveness of care, guidance and support, results in a harmonious and caring school community.

Accurate self-evaluation processes are becoming embedded as part of the school's monitoring procedures and provide a realistic picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The school has dealt well with the situation caused by the resignation of the previous headteacher by quickly creating a revised leadership structure to maintain stability and

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begin addressing some of the weaknesses. The leadership team has the full support of the staff, students and the governing body. The school makes good use of additional support and guidance provided by the local authority through specialist consultants in English and mathematics, and has appropriate plans to increase its leadership capacity. Taken together, all these factors mean that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently address inadequate achievement in mathematics, by:
 - strengthening leadership and management in mathematics
 - building on the good practice which is becoming established within the mathematics department.
- Improve leadership by:
 - ensuring that all middle leaders are fully supported in performing to the same high standard
 - identifying what leads to success in the school's specialist subject areas, and sharing this good practice with subject areas where performance is weaker.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that by July 2011 the majority of lessons are good or better, by:
 - providing further training for staff on planning and the use of assessment information
 - making effective use of data to track students' progress and attainment
 - using assessment data consistently well to ensure that all lessons include challenging activities that motivate all students to aim high.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

In lessons, progress ranged from inadequate to outstanding. Some particularly good learning was observed in English, drama and German. In an effective Year 9 German lesson, the teacher's planning and use of prior attainment data led to outstanding progress. Learning was checked at regular points throughout the lesson and the students could articulate how to improve their work. However, in lessons where learning was inadequate, the needs of students of differing abilities were not entirely met through the learning opportunities provided. Students made little, if any progress, in these lessons and did not know how to improve on their performance. The number of students achieving five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics dropped in 2009 and showed no improvement in 2010. This is because too many students made inadequate progress in mathematics. Although standards of attainment appear to be improving for the younger students, for older students they remain below average with the current Year 11 students still underachieving in mathematics. The achievement of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is better than that of other students because of the specialist support they receive. Many more boys than girls fall within this category. However, overall achievement for these students remains inadequate because of the weaknesses in mathematics. Achievement in the specialist subjects is good, especially

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in music where 83% of students gained a good GCSE pass, but the specialism is not yet having a noticeable effect on raising attainment across the whole school.

Students say they feel safe in school. They demonstrate a good understanding of issues relating to safety and are confident that any concerns will be dealt with swiftly by the school. Students' behaviour is satisfactory and they treat each other with respect. Incidents involving racist behaviour or bullying are few and the school uses restorative justice to resolve any incidents to good effect. The school encourages students to lead a healthy lifestyle. Many students take advantage of extra-curricular activities and say they have adapted their lifestyle because of the school's intervention. The school makes a positive contribution to the local and wider community. An active student parliament of over 150 students contributes to school improvement. The performing arts specialism provides opportunities for international contacts. One student from the school band tour of Canada said: 'I felt a chill run down my spine when we reached the moment when we played on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. This was the best moment for me.' There is a strong sense of students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Students have high aspirations for themselves and the school provides a broad range of activities which, despite well-below average attainment, prepares students satisfactorily for their future. These activities allow students to develop a range of personal life skills including problem-solving, teamworking and risk assessment. As a result, students are confident and better-prepared for the world of work.

Attendance is broadly average, but the proportion of persistent absentees is higher than the national figure. Punctuality between lessons is variable but improving as students are increasingly aware of its importance.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is predominantly satisfactory although a small proportion of teaching is good while a similar amount is inadequate. In the best lessons, good teaching skills and a variety of techniques maintain a fast pace throughout. Teachers' effective use of questioning encourages students to reflect, be inquisitive and further their knowledge. In such cases, teachers take risks and inspire students to learn. Students are aware of their current attainment levels and informative marking shows them how to reach the next level. The school's specialist areas encourage students to work more independently and nurture an increasing self-reliance. For example, in an outstanding Year 11 drama lesson, the activities were exceptionally well planned and students were confident in challenging each other's perceptions. In predominantly satisfactory lessons, teachers do not make enough use of available assessment data to support learning, and instead of providing a range of activities of varying difficulty to meet each student's individual needs, all do the same work. The work does not present enough challenge to get the best out of all ability groups, and follow-up marking does not show students how to improve their work.

The satisfactory curriculum is beginning to have a positive impact on students' progress but has not yet improved attainment in mathematics. The innovative approach to the Key Stage 3 curriculum through 'baccalaureate' lessons, where the emphasis is on developing a set of skills, allows students to complete themed learning tasks and to acquire the necessary skills to prepare them better for Key Stage 4. A good example of this is the

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work done by Year 7 students on the theme of London. An alternative curriculum provides well for students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and has both reduced the number of exclusions and improved students' attendance. The curriculum is evaluated annually and work with partners is developing well and enhances provision. The performing arts curriculum and extra-curricular activities have a positive impact on school life. One boy said, 'I chose this school because of the performing arts specialism and I have not been disappointed it has exceeded all my expectations.'

Good arrangements are made for the care, guidance and support of students and the school's SPECTRUM area offers good provision for students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Transition arrangements from primary school are smooth and Year 7 students settle in very quickly.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership and management structure at senior level has recently been revised. Roles and responsibilities have been redefined and are known to all staff and students. As a result, each member of staff has a clear understanding of their role in furthering school improvement. The acting headteachers have a realistic picture of the school's strengths and areas for development and are maintaining stability until a longer-term solution is implemented.

Monitoring and evaluation processes are satisfactory. Some analysis is undertaken of the impact of initiatives on meeting the needs of groups of students, for example, those who are more vulnerable or who speak English as an additional language. The school's self-evaluation documentation correctly identifies key issues for the school but is not sufficiently sharp in its focus. However, the culture of monitoring, evaluating and reviewing school initiatives is embedded and is starting to have a positive impact. Middle leaders share the vision of the senior leaders and are committed to bringing about school improvement; however, performance at this level is variable and some staff lack training in the use of data for tracking students' progress and planning for learning. There is a clear vision about how to improve teaching and learning. Effective coaching sessions for teachers are addressing areas of weakness, although the effectiveness of the school's monitoring forms for lesson observations is blunted because they focus more on teaching than on learning and progress.

Governance is satisfactory and the governing body is aware of the school's strengths and barriers to progress. The governing body took swift action to secure the leadership of the

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school through consultation with the local authority. It fulfils its statutory duties in relation to the safeguarding of children.

The school works well in partnership with a range of organisations and the impact of this work on the learning and progress of students is now monitored effectively. For example, students who are at risk of losing interest in their education benefit from partnership work with Lewisham College. The school actively promotes community cohesion and takes into account the needs of minority ethnic students. Projects involve effective engagement with local and wider community groups but the school does not yet evaluate to what extent these activities have an impact on student progress. Equality of opportunity for all students has a high profile and the school has taken concerted action to narrow gaps in achievement between groups, particularly in relation to numeracy skills and there are signs of improving patterns of progress, including in mathematics, in Years 7 to 10 across all groups of students. The school promotes inclusive practice through its good equal opportunities policy and makes provision for students from pupil referral units to enable them to continue with their schooling.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Sixth form

The sixth form currently comprises a federation arrangement in Year 13 and a self-contained provision in Year 12. Attainment is below average, but this represents satisfactory progress given students' starting points. There was an improvement in A-level results in 2010, particularly in business and drama, which led to an overall increase in A*/B grades from 11.4% to 37.8%. Pass rates overall have improved, with more subject areas securing 100% pass rates in 2010.

Students speak positively about the sixth form and enjoy the warm atmosphere and support from their teachers. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, there

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are some good lessons where students are required to use higher-order thinking skills and openly challenge their peers. Attendance in the sixth form is average and the school is appropriately targeting students with poor attendance.

The head of sixth form realises that the satisfactory curriculum does not always fully meet the needs of all sixth-form students, and that the tracking of students' progress is not always rigorous enough in supporting effective intervention strategies. The restructuring of the federation and the implementation of a new management structure have resulted in a visionary plan and a clearer understanding of how to improve provision and raise levels of attainment.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

The small proportion of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, expressed their satisfaction with the school. They feel that the school keeps their child safe and are positive about their child's experience at the school. A small minority of parents and carers believe the school does not encourage their child to be healthy. The inspection evidence shows that many students take advantage of the healthy food option in the school canteen and the majority of them participate in healthy extra-curricular activities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sedgemoor 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 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1538 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	35	62	50	11	9	5	4
The school keeps my child safe	45	37	63	51	11	9	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	43	53	43	14	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	34	65	53	10	8	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	39	32	68	55	7	6	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	25	64	52	18	15	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	20	67	54	24	20	2	2
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)	29	24	64	52	10	8	4	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	30	63	51	13	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	34	56	46	12	10	6	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	15	70	57	18	15	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	40	33	62	50	7	6	5	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	37	60	49	10	8	5	4

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



16 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Sedgemoor School, London SE6 3QW

You will remember that inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you for the welcome you gave us. Most of you say you enjoy school, although a small minority believe behaviour could be better. A very large majority of you believe the senior staff are doing a very good job.

These are our key findings:

- too many of you are underachieving in mathematics
- the school has an accurate understanding of what it does well and how it can improve
- care, guidance and support are good and this leads to some good personal outcomes
- the senior staff are making every effort to maintain stability in the absence of a permanent headteacher
- some of your teachers do not expect enough of you because they do not make best use of the data they collect on your attainment and progress
- the quality of teaching and learning is currently satisfactory, but is sometimes good or even better in the specialist subjects A small proportion of teaching is however inadequate.
- the sixth form is inclusive, students are happy with the provision, and outcomes are satisfactory overall
- the school is a safe community and encourages you to do the right thing.

The school has been given a 'notice to improve'. Inspectors will visit in 6 to 8 months time to check how well the school leaders have improved:

- your achievement, particularly in mathematics
- subject leadership, by providing training and spreading best practice
- teaching, by ensuring that all teachers make more effective use of data and track your progress better.

You can all help by taking full advantage of the learning opportunities offered to you in the school.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell

Her Majesty's Inspector

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