

# The Royal Docks Community School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131929
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	362842
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Samantha Morgan-Price HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Camley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Ruth Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Prince Regent Lane Custom House London E16 3HS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7540 2700
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7540 2701
<b>Email address</b>	admin@royaldocks.newham.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 March 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	362842

---

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](mailto: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 documentation 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'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The number of lessons observed was 40, which was equivalent to the number of teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, the chair and other members of the governing body, staff and representatives from the local authority and the National Challenge. They observed the schools work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation documentation, lesson observation records, curriculum and extra-curricular information, minutes of meetings and data on students' current achievement.

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

The effectiveness of teaching in addressing students differing needs and enabling them to make progress and how well teachers are using a range of activities which stimulate and motivate them.

The effectiveness of target setting by all staff.

How effectively managers and the governing body monitor and evaluate the schools performance and the effectiveness of their planning for improvement.

## Information about the school

This larger-than-average secondary school serves an ethnically diverse student population. The largest groups of students come from White British or Black African heritages. The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of students with English as an additional language is also significantly higher than the national average. A third of the schools roll has a special educational need and/or disability which is significantly higher than seen nationally. The largest proportions of these students have moderate learning and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school became a Trust School in June 2010.

**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****3**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school is emerging from very difficult times. The headteacher, the executive headteacher and the leadership team have worked successfully to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise students attainment. Although students attainment remains low, the rapid and secure progress students are making in their learning is much improved and is stimulating better attainment. The schools data indicate that current Year 11 students will achieve challenging targets for the proportion of students who will achieve five or more A\* to C GCSEs, including English and mathematics. It has taken some time to embed some important improvements, the results of which are leading to a strongly rising trend in attainment, notably in mathematics and science. Such improvements have been more marked in lower year groups in the school. For example, the schools data indicate that a large proportion of Year 10 students are already achieving grade C equivalent work in mathematics. The progress in English has not been as strong; this subject is a key priority for the school. The curriculum is broad and balanced with good provision for information and communication technology in both key stages. However, the development of literacy across the curriculum is at an early stage of development and is yet to impact on students attainment. The school leaders are developing a number of different initiatives, although literacy pathways will be more securely in place when they are built into the curriculum plan for both key stages.

Teaching is improving strongly; many good lessons were seen during the inspection. In these lessons, teachers used methods to enable students to actively learn. There was good use of group and paired work where students developed their skills of discussion and evaluated their own learning well. Marking is of variable quality, especially in terms of its effectiveness in improving students progress. Some very good marking was seen, where teachers comments enabled students to understand what they needed to do as their next steps to improve their work. However, Students do not always respond to teachers questions or advice.

Students recognise the improvements in teaching and behaviour. They are firmly of the view that the school keeps them safe. The school has implemented many good strategies to improve students behaviour, which are working well. Students say there are less incidences of poor behaviour around the school. The good care, guidance and support provided by the school support students in their learning well. The good partnerships the school has forged are particularly beneficial to more vulnerable students at risk of not attending lessons or those needing increased support to remove some of their barriers to learning. Although students overall attendance is satisfactory, it is improving.

**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 improved quality of teaching has resulted from the implementation of innovative strategies by leaders and the good partnership with other schools. Teachers are supported well which enables them to be open about wanting to improve their practice. This support and encouragement has also given teachers a willingness to pursue more imaginative methods of teaching. Learning walks by senior and middle leaders, peer observations, and teaching and learning reviews are some of the methods used by leaders to gain a more accurate picture of the quality of lessons. This work has given leaders and managers a good infrastructure to further improve teaching. These actions, along with the schools accurate self-evaluation of its progress and priorities, enable leaders to demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

The governing body adds an additional layer of scrutiny to the schools work. The scrutiny of subject performance is routinely undertaken. However, there is a need for leaders to place a sharper focus on how well teaching and learning are improving within subjects and the specific actions required to improve the quality of teaching overall further.

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?**

- Raise attainment, especially in English, by September 2012 by:
  - improving the quality and consistency of teachers written feedback and ensuring students act on this advice to improve their work
  - revise and implement the schools literacy policy to enable a more cohesive whole-school approach to drive up standards
  - ensure that self-evaluation and action planning improves students outcomes by having a sharper focus on learning and progress.

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

**3**

The improved progress that students are now making will enable the schools challenging targets for attainment to be realised. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their peers. Teachers providing students with opportunities to discuss their learning have become more of a focus in lessons. There were good examples seen where students challenged each others understanding of tasks set and engaged in good debate about broader topics. Students knew their National Curriculum levels and generally knew how the lessons related to their attainment targets. Although behaviour is satisfactory, the many instances of good behaviour in lessons demonstrate that behaviour is improving. This improvement is positively contributing to students learning. Students understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, although some do not always adopt one. The work of the student mentors and behaviour mentors is appreciated by students. The contribution of the prefects and ambassadors is enabling students to take on increased leadership responsibilities. However, students do not feel that the school council gives them sufficient opportunities to make an effective contribution to the school.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

The quality of teaching is improving strongly. Higher levels of challenge and meeting the differing needs of students now feature in the majority of lessons. The brisk pace of many lessons encourages students to learn well. There is an increased variety of activities that involve students working in groups or pairs to exchange ideas and to evaluate their learning. The criteria to achieve higher National Curriculum targets were shared well with students which gave them good encouragement and challenged them well. Information and communication technology was used well and there were good examples seen during the inspection of teachers extending the use of interactive whiteboards. However, not all lessons are as strong. On occasions, the classroom management by teachers was not effective in securing quick responses from students to maximise their learning. Some students also felt that they were hampered in their learning when teachers talked for too long.

The breadth of the curriculum is a particular strength in Key Stage 4 and there is an intention to broaden curriculum pathways further. There is an extensive enrichment programme that includes additional academic subjects that also provides for higher ability students. Subjects offered include statistics, sociology and AS mathematics. There is modest student participation in sporting activities after school. The school recognises that there is a need to strengthen its cross-curricular provision for numeracy. A few students

**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

felt that the preparation to apply for post-16 opportunities does not always meet their needs.

In the schools own parents and carers survey, the large majority felt that guidance given to Year 11 to prepare them for their next stage of education was good. School prefects are used well to support students to know about their National Curriculum levels and what they needed to do to improve. The partnership work using the education welfare officer and learning mentors is enabling the school to reduce the proportion of persistently absent students. There is a good induction programme for Year 7 students and effective preparations are made to support them prior to starting their new school. The links with prestigious schools and colleges are contributing well towards raising students aspirations.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The significant increase in good or better lessons and rapidly improving rates of progress, together with the improvements in behaviour and attendance, are testament to a stronger and more effective leadership team. Staff are supportive of the leadership team and feel they are encouraged to do well. They appreciate the support given to improve their quality of teaching. The school prioritises the well-being of students effectively and safeguarding procedures are robust and its work with other agencies is effective in supporting students who are vulnerable due to their circumstances. Senior and middle leaders are now accountable for their actions. The good partnerships have helped to improve capacity at all levels of leadership especially the contribution made by the executive headteacher. The senior team uses data well and its developing use by teachers is informing them which students require more support in lessons. The governing body is now providing better scrutiny of the schools work and is increasingly holding school leaders to account. The work of the link governors twinned with subjects is developing well.

The school is a cohesive community, although leaders recognise that a closer evaluation of their contribution to the local and global community is required. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination satisfactorily and leaders are working hard to improve the achievement of all groups of students. Parents and carers are kept well informed of the schools developments and are given effective feedback about how well their child is progressing. There is an increasing dialogue with parents and carers through the many partnerships that the school has created to secure the well-being of their children, particularly those who are more vulnerable.

**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

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so



## **Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



11 March 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of The Royal Docks Community School, London E16 3HS**

Thank you for the help you gave the inspection team members when we visited the school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, around the school and in meetings.

Your attendance and behaviour are satisfactory. You told us that you felt the quality of lessons and students behaviour were improving. It is clear that you value the care and support that teachers give you and your results at Key Stage 4 are improving this year, especially in mathematics. Your grades in English are not as good. You say that the school keeps you extremely safe. You understand how to keep healthy, although you do not always take up the opportunities to undertake sporting activities after school. We recognise the work of the ambassadors; prefects and mentors give you opportunities to take on responsibilities and to support each other. Under the leadership of your headteacher, the executive headteacher and the senior teachers, faster and more effective actions have been taken to improve your grades and to help you achieve better.

Senior leaders are identifying what they need to do in order that you continue to improve your work. However, there are a few points that they still need to attend to. We have asked them to:

improve your grades, especially in English, by:

improving the quality of written feedback given to you so that you know what to do to improve your work; you also need to respond to the teachers comments for improvement

revising and implementing the schools literacy policy to allow you to have more opportunities to improve your literacy skills

making sure that when the performance of subjects is reviewed, the resulting action plan improves your outcomes.

You can all help the school by behaving and attending well at all times and using the opportunities to contribute to the school and improve your physical well-being.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Morgan-Price

Her Majesty's 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](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**