

Chiswick School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	137907
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	395818
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	John Meinke

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
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	1266
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Dodge
Headteacher	Mr Anthony Ryan
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 November 2008
School address	Burlington Lane Chiswick London W4 3UN
Telephone number	020 8747 0031
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Meinke	Additional inspector
Gary Kirkley	Additional Inspector
Patricia MacLachlan	Additional Inspector
Martin Marsh	Additional Inspector
Gillian Smith	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 43 teachers teach 43 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a number of other lessons. They held meetings with three groups of students, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, minutes of the governing body and school policies. They also analysed responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 195 parents and carers and others completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

Chiswick School is larger than the average sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The students come from a wide range of socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Most students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being from Black African heritage and Other White backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is much higher than that found nationally. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above the national average. It also provides off-site provision for students whose circumstances makes them vulnerable and are at risk of exclusion at the Chiswick School Centre. The school has Technology College status and has gained various awards relating to its provision, including Eco Award Silver, Healthy School status, International Schools Award, Investors in People and Sportsmark. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

The current headteacher joined the school in September 2010. The school converted to academy status on 1 March 2012.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. Students’ academic progress is good. The school is not outstanding because, while significant progress has been made since the previous inspection in raising attainment for most groups of students, the achievement of a small number of students lags behind because their low aspirations, and repeated, occasional absences prevent them from making the progress of which they are capable.
- Attainment is above average and in 2011 the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE results at grade C or higher, including English and mathematics, was above average. The sixth form is good. Well-planned lessons encourage independence and combined with an appropriate curriculum lead to students making better than expected progress.
- The quality of teaching is good, with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. In a small minority of lessons opportunities were missed to relate learning to real-life situations, and questioning did not always sufficiently challenge all students.
- The behaviour and safety of students are good. Leaders have established high expectations of behaviour and learning. Consistent approaches to behaviour management, along with students’ positive attitudes to learning, ensure that the school is calm and orderly and lessons proceed without interruption. Actions have been taken to successfully improve attendance since the previous inspection so that it is now above average.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher and his senior team have resulted in sustained improvement, based on high ambitions for the school and all of its students. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and the robust management of performance along with targeted professional development have increased the proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body,

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have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is a relentless drive to improve performance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement for the small number of students who are falling behind by raising their aspirations and improving their attendance.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to secure outstanding progress for all by:
 - relating learning activities more clearly to real-life situations in order to make them more relevant to students
 - using skilful questioning to ensure that all students are challenged during lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The positive attitudes of students to learning ensure that they develop and acquire knowledge and skills well. Good and some outstanding progress was seen in the large majority of lessons observed, characterised by a high level of engagement of students in their work and an enjoyment of learning. Students work productively and at a good pace and are confident about discussing what they have learned. Challenging targets are set, which are carefully monitored by leaders so that effective intervention can be put in place to ensure that students do not fall behind. The school has taken decisive actions to successfully close the gaps between the attainment of most student groups, including boys, compared to that of students nationally and there is a clear determination to ensure that the attainment of all students is significantly above national averages. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their child was making good progress at the school and inspectors agree.

Attainment at the school is above average, with the school achieving its best ever Year 11 results in 2011. Sustained improvements in English and mathematics have resulted in higher attainment and students develop their skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics well. The school is taking decisive action to improve the reading skills of students who enter the school with low prior attainment in English. Arrangements for early entries to GCSE courses are carefully managed to ensure that students reach their full potential.

Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress. Arrangements for supporting these students have been extensively reviewed and are now having more impact on their progress, ensuring that the gap between their

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attainment compared to that of all students nationally has been rapidly closed. Students who speak English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress.

Students in the sixth form achieve well and make good progress. Well-planned lessons encourage students to take ownership of their learning and to develop independence.

Quality of teaching

Lesson observations, discussions with students and the quality of work in their books indicate that the quality of teaching is good and improving, with examples of outstanding practice. Most parents and carers felt that their child is well taught and students and inspectors agree. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan engaging lessons. Good relationships between students and adults based on high expectations ensure a calm atmosphere for learning. Good questioning is used to extend students' learning and check their understanding, reshaping tasks when necessary. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning. Support from additional adults is appropriately focused on developing independence. The planned curriculum makes a good contribution to students' achievement and provides good opportunities for promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Regular homework extends and supports students' learning well. High-quality marking and guided assessment within lessons enable students to know what to do to improve their learning.

In the best lessons students are challenged to extend their learning. In an outstanding English lesson, a dramatic interpretation of a poem was used to create a highly memorable experience. Higher-order questioning was used to extend students' learning and encourage them to reflect on their learning. In an outstanding physical education lesson, well-sequenced learning and rapid transitions between activities led to good pace with no time being wasted. Students were encouraged to reflect on the progress they were making and consider what they needed to do next to improve their learning.

In the small minority of lessons where teaching was satisfactory, opportunities were missed to relate learning to real-life situations and make lessons more memorable and relevant to students. Questioning sometimes did not challenge students to extend their learning and, on a few occasions, gaps in their knowledge and misconceptions were not always picked up on and corrected. In a few lessons observed the learning objectives were not sufficiently clear to ensure that students fully understood the purpose of tasks and activities set by teachers during lessons.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

'Chiswick School provides a friendly, purposeful atmosphere and promotes ambition for every child.' This comment by a parent/carer reflects the positive views of parents and carers, students and staff about the school. The environment is calm, well

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ordered and friendly. Students mix well together and interact with adults with good humour and good manners.

Positive behaviour management strategies are firmly and consistently enforced across the school. Students understand and value the clear boundaries that have been put in place and the school's records show that incidences of poor behaviour have decreased over time. An area of strength is the support provided through the Chiswick School Centre for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable and who are at risk of exclusion; this support has enabled such students to remain in mainstream education and achieve GCSE qualifications. Anti-bullying campaigns have been effective and incidences of bullying are few and dealt with effectively on the rare occasions when they do happen. Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and feel confident that they can discuss any concerns or problems with staff. There are some opportunities for student leadership, for example through peer mentoring of new Year 7 students, and the school is working to increase the extent to which students can manage their own behaviour.

Most parents and carers agreed that their child feels safe at school and students concur with this view. The large majority of parents, carers and students agreed that the standard of behaviour in the school is good. However, a small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about poor behaviour and its impact on learning. Good behaviour was seen during the inspection. The school acknowledges that, although good behaviour is now the norm, the legacy of lower standards in the past will take time to shift. Senior leaders are not complacent about behaviour and safety and there is a determination to secure outstanding behaviour.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and his senior team have led a relentless drive for improvement which has resulted in sustained increases in achievement over time. Middle leaders support this process by making a strong and cohesive contribution to school improvement. The governing body knows the school very well and holds it to account well. School self-evaluation is accurate and detailed and informs sharply focused improvement plans. Assessment data is used forensically to set challenging targets, track progress, ensure equality of access to provision and improve outcomes for all students. Along with senior leaders, the governing body ensures that arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. The capacity for further improvement is strong.

School leaders are sharp and accurate in their evaluation of the quality of teaching. They have a clear understanding of its strengths and decisive actions have been taken to tackle weaknesses. There is a clear drive to improve the quality of teaching to outstanding through professional development with peer observation and coaching. Performance management is robust and ensures accountability.

The school's curriculum is good. Regular review makes sure that it evolves to keep meeting the needs of learners. Vocational courses have been introduced at Key

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Stage 4 and the sixth form to better meet the needs of all learners. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including through the 'Opening Minds' curriculum in Key Stage 3, religious studies and personal, social and health education. Effective promotion of equality and tackling discrimination are seen in the equality of respect and support given to vocational and academic courses, in the successful drive to close achievement gaps and students' matter-of-fact responses to individual differences. Arrangements for careers advice and guidance are being strengthened through partnerships with local businesses. Students in the sixth form have benefited from improved advice and guidance and more rigorous entry requirements for level 3 courses. Good support is in place for students to progress to further and higher education, apprenticeships and employment. The school has taken good steps to further engage with parents and carers, including through hosting open mornings and strengthening links with feeder primary schools.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Chiswick School, London W4 3UN

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to us when we inspected your school recently. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for sharing your views of the school and how well it prepares you for the future. We agree that your school has improved greatly since its last inspection and is now a good school.

You told us, and your parents and carers agree, that you feel safe at school and that you are confident that staff will act effectively to resolve any concerns. You say that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively on the few occasions it happens. You commented on the improvements in behaviour since the last inspection and have welcomed the more consistent behaviour management and clear boundaries that are now in place. Behaviour is now good and any disruption is dealt with well.

Most of you feel that you learn a lot in lessons and teaching at the school is good and we agree. Lessons are well planned with interesting tasks and activities that encourage your positive attitudes to learning. You are set challenging targets, which are carefully monitored by the school to ensure that you do not fall behind. You have a clear understanding of what you need to do to improve your learning. The result of this is that your GCSE examinations have improved considerably and are now above average. Achievement in the sixth form is also good and a wider range of courses is now offered to better meet your needs.

We have suggested some improvements which will help to improve the school further. We would like teachers to relate your learning more to real-life experiences and set you more challenging questions. Some students do not come to school regularly and we would like the school to do more to support them to improve their attendance so that they receive a good education. You can all help by continuing to work hard and by making the most of the opportunities you have to manage your own behaviour.

We wish you all at Chiswick School a happy and successful future.

Yours sincerely

John Meinke
Lead inspector

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