

# Alperton Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101562
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	355025
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Meena Wood

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1450
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	351
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Heiser
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maggie Rafee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Stanley Avenue Wembley , Middlesex Wembley HA0 4JE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 50 lessons, observed 30 teachers, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, leaders and managers, teaching staff and students. They carried out a number of short focused visits to classrooms and joint observations of lessons with the school's senior managers and shadowed identified students for longer periods in lessons. They carefully scrutinised the school development plan and departmental reviews, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, governing body minutes, internal teaching and learning observations, students' work, 320 questionnaires from parents and carers, student questionnaires and staff questionnaires.

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

- Whether teaching and assessment practice are sufficiently tailored to the needs of different minority ethnic and ability groups across all subjects.
- How effectively the school responds to the complex language and literacy needs of a broad range of students.
- The learning, progress and behaviour of underachieving students in lessons.
- The consistency of outcomes for students across key stages, as well as in vocational and academic subjects.
- The capacity of middle leadership to ensure evenness in the quality of teaching across all subjects and key stages.

## Information about the school

Alperton is a large secondary school with specialist status in mathematics and computing. The extended school offers support to parents and carers through a family learning programme and community access, and these include adult learning and links with primary schools. A small number of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number with statements of special educational needs is also low. Most of these students have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The vast majority of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds; the main groups are Indian, British Asian and Black African, with a smaller proportion from Black Caribbean and White Other. The smallest group of students are from White British backgrounds. The number of advanced bilingual learners is exceptionally high, with a moderately high number at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. Gujarati, Somali and Tamil are the main heritage languages. Nearly one third of the school comprises of refugees and asylum seekers, with relatively high numbers of students starting and leaving school during the academic year. High numbers of students are known to be eligible for free school meals.

**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?****1****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****1**

## Main findings

Alperton Community School is an outstanding school that is successfully raising the achievement of students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds, most of whom enter the school with below average levels of attainment and many of whom are facing considerable barriers to their learning. All work exceptionally well together in this harmonious and cohesive community and make good progress, resulting in achievement that is improving significantly year-on-year. One student reported, 'We feel like a family here where everyone matters to each other!'

Students' outcomes are outstanding, as a result of the good teaching and a responsive curriculum with well-structured pathways that are highly suited to students' needs and aspirations, along with an outstanding specialist curriculum in mathematics and computing. In addition, excellent care, guidance and support, detailed tracking of students' progress and personalised extra-curricular interventions are provided for students not on track to achieve their potential. The school excels in its care and education of significant numbers of vulnerable students. These include those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those with English as an additional language, refugees and asylum seekers. All students feel highly valued and very safe. They display respectful behaviour, high levels of maturity and good leadership qualities. Attendance is high and punctuality very good, as the vast majority are well motivated and enjoy school greatly. Students' attitudes to learning are exemplary; when given the opportunities in lessons, many work successfully as independent learners. Most teachers take into consideration students' levels when planning activities and tasks, especially for those of middle and low ability, and this helps ensure that, in the majority of cases, these students make good or even outstanding progress. This is especially the case in mathematics. However, elsewhere, insufficient account is sometimes taken of the needs of students of higher ability and those who are gifted and talented. ♦ There are great strengths in assessment across all subjects but also some inconsistency in teachers' checking of students' learning and marking of their work. Given the low reading ages of most students, the school places enormous emphasis on developing their literacy, language and numeracy skills from Year 7 onwards and this has been largely successful. However, students are not consistently given a similar range of opportunities to practise their computing skills across the curriculum. ♦♦

A robust focus on self-evaluation at all levels of the organisation and an ethos of continuous improvement through detailed monitoring of teaching are key factors in the school's success in raising standards. In some instances, lesson monitoring does not have the same rigour across all key stages or courses, especially in the sixth form and the lower school. In particular, observers do not always ensure teachers check all students' learning. In all other respects, the headteacher has been inspirational in leading the management

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team, and is supported by the strong governing body. This has led to the school establishing a highly positive ethos of achievement and inclusion, thereby overcoming the numerous challenges brought by the low educational standards many students have when they first arrive. This is notably the case in the sixth form, where students' achievement and the overall effectiveness of the provision at the time of the last inspection were satisfactory, but which are now good. Consequently the school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Strengthen the quality of teaching and assessment across all key stages by May 2012 through:
  - more consistent monitoring of the progress and learning of all students during lesson observations
  - greater checking of learning and more rigorous marking of students' work
  - ensuring learning activities are consistently well suited to students with English language and literacy needs and creating challenge for all students, especially those of higher ability
  - providing more opportunities for students to practise computing skills in all subjects.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Given the very low starting points of Year 11 students in 2010, they made good progress and 58% of these attained five A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, in their GCSE examinations. Students' progress in mathematics is outstanding and good in English. According to the school's tracking data, current Year 11 students are predicted to surpass this and to attain results that are above national averages. The sharp focus that school leaders have on the attainment of Black Caribbean and Somali students is beginning to reduce the gap in attainment for these groups. In a large number of lessons observed by inspectors, students were responsive to well-structured tasks, took responsibility for their learning, and visibly enjoyed learning. Students at the early stages of learning English, individual students with moderate learning difficulties and those with challenging behaviour receive excellent out-of-class support, and overall make good, and in some cases, outstanding progress. However, the progress they make in a minority of lessons is more variable, owing to the uneven support they receive in developing their literacy and language skills. Structured learning opportunities contribute to broadening students' social and cultural horizons and developing strong self-esteem. For instance, in one lesson, students gave heartfelt and mature responses when asked to share aspects of their culture and religion with their peers.

As a result of the school's wide range of volunteering and charitable activities, even students who have recently arrived in the country are able to talk with real passion about these experiences and the skills they gain. Students enjoy high levels of participation in sporting activities and, acting as ambassadors for healthy eating, have recently produced a 'Tasty Tales' cookbook that reflects a range of local community diets. Students are highly proactive in shaping the school through marketing activities and are influencing the

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design and rebuilding of their playground areas. ♦ The quality of students' work experiences is high, as demonstrated through employer feedback, and they display the responsible attitudes and aptitudes they need to equip them for further education and the world of work. ♦

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

In the best lessons, learning activities are planned carefully to take into account students' levels of literacy and language skills and their abilities within the subject. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and excellent classroom management skills and use these to inspire learning very effectively. In these cases, they typically design simplified or bilingual worksheets and glossaries and use questioning skilfully to check students' learning. In one outstanding science lesson, all students, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, carried out an experiment on heat reactions and successfully evaluated their own learning. ♦ More able students were challenged through a complex task that tested their presentation skills.

However, the school's two sites provide unique challenges in terms of ensuring equal focus on the learning, progress and behaviour of students in Key Stages 3 and 4. Inspectors found slightly better teaching and behaviour in the upper school than in the

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lower school. The school is working hard to overcome these inconsistencies. Assessment is satisfactory as there are some inconsistencies in marking and checking of all students' learning and not all teachers plan sufficiently well to ensure challenge for all students, especially the more able students and those who are gifted and talented. Academic support for those with language difficulties is not well targeted in a minority of lessons. This is because the highly effective learning strategies taught to these students out-of-lessons are not always included in the lesson planning process by the subject teachers. Curriculum pathways, particularly for key skills, life skills and vocational options, along with a number of qualifications for students at entry and level 1 ensure that the curriculum is very well matched to students' needs and that students can achieve and progress. This demonstrates the school's belief that students should aim high and has resulted in outstanding outcomes overall.

Excellent arrangements for transition into school and induction for late arrivals with language needs ensure students make a good start to their education. All students benefit from wider learning experiences through citizenship and a range of extra-curricular activities, including excellent use of the school's specialist subjects in mathematics and computing.

The attendance and progress of all students and, in particular, vulnerable students at risk of non-attendance and those who underachieve, are rigorously tracked by personal tutors and pastoral support assistants. Students in Years 9 and 11 receive excellent advice and guidance on subject choices and parents and carers are kept exceptionally well informed. They are able to contribute to their children's learning through the popular parents' evenings, parents' surgeries and website. The school has ensured that parents and carers with low levels of English are helped to access information on their children through bilingual support assistants.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Through the headteacher's outstanding leadership and excellent management of her staff, the school has successfully transformed its learning culture. Managers work cohesively as a team, sharing the core values of ensuring success in students' academic studies and personal development and well-being. The school's accurate self-evaluation process is indicative of its collaborative approach and wholehearted commitment to improvement, as well as to tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities, and includes high levels of support and challenge from the governing body. ♦ For instance, individual governors have reviewed levels of achievement with middle leaders, undertaken lesson

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observations and monitored safer recruitment practice. Safeguarding procedures are consequently highly robust across all aspects of the provision. The school's development plans give a highly effective account of its strengths and the areas where it needs to improve. Departmental plans fully reflect this analytical approach, are based on evidence from internal lesson observations, work scrutiny and learning walks, and focus on raising achievement and standards. A notable strength is the sharing of good teaching practice across subjects. The school has developed an enormous range of productive external partnerships, including strong links with its local primary schools. Strong support for parents, carers and families exists through the school's successful extended provision, which works assiduously and very effectively to promote a stronger voice for all parents and carers in the education and care of their children.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Sixth form

Following a restructure in September 2009, the leadership and management of the sixth form changed and this has resulted in more rigour in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and students' progress. Outcomes for sixth form students are now good. National published data in 2010 indicate that students entering the sixth form with below average levels of GCSE attainment make excellent progress, relative to their starting points. A-level and AS standards are at the national average. However, students taking applied GCE subjects such as business, health and social care as well as foundation and level 2 courses do not achieve as well as other groups.

Academic guidance is good as students review their personal learning targets and progress with tutors and receive highly valued support and feedback. Progression to higher education for students on A-level courses is high and the majority are accepted on their first choice of university for their chosen study.



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The quality of teaching is good and is characterised by excellent teacher subject knowledge, but opportunities for students to reflect deeply and develop higher-order thinking skills are limited across some subjects. Nevertheless, the vast majority of students demonstrate a sense of self-direction and ambition.

A notable strength of the sixth form is the development of literacy skills for advanced bilingual learners through the explicit teaching of academic language skills.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very happy with the education received by their children. Inspectors found school/home communication to be mainly good, as the majority of parents and carers believed they were very well informed about their children's progress and the school supported them in helping their children learn. A very small minority voiced concerns about the school's strategies in dealing effectively with unacceptable students' behaviour but inspectors did not find any evidence to support this during this inspection.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alperton Community 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 320 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1450 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	35	192	60	9	3	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	110	34	190	59	15	5	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	129	40	174	54	12	4	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	108	34	183	57	28	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	31	193	60	25	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	87	27	204	64	23	7	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	22	209	65	36	11	1	0
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)	90	28	197	62	26	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	72	23	204	64	34	11	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	87	27	183	57	36	11	10	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	19	204	64	38	12	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	77	24	217	68	22	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	125	39	169	53	21	7	1	0

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.**



13 May 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Alperton Community School, Wembley HAO 4JE**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and were impressed by how polite and courteous you were and your excellent attitudes towards your learning. We judged that your school is outstanding.

Congratulations to all of you who regularly attend and are punctual to lessons, as this has helped you be successful in your studies. Most of you make good progress in your learning and attain average standards in GCSE examinations. If you are not making the progress you should, the school is very quick at providing you with excellent subject support and guidance outside lessons. The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. The school has put in place excellent courses that help you progress in your studies, in particular for those of you with English language and literacy needs. There are many stimulating extra-curricular opportunities that help you to achieve success in your studies and to develop as responsible and caring citizens. The school provides you with excellent advice and guidance that prepares you very well for the next stages in your learning and life. Many of you stay on in the sixth form, where you achieve good outcomes on A-level courses or progress from other courses to A level, in line with your aspirations.

To help the school improve further, we have asked senior leaders to do the following:

- monitor your progress and learning more closely during lesson observations and help teachers to plan more appropriate activities, check your learning and mark your work more carefully so that all of you fully achieve your potential, especially those who are more able and those with language and literacy needs.
- give you more opportunities to develop your computing skills across the curriculum.

We wish you all the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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