

# Sarah Bonnell School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 102758           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Newham           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 355259           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 8–9 June 2011    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Anne Wellham HMI |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Comprehensive                     |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Girls                             |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 1189                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Irene Stephenson                  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Cauthar Tooley                    |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 11–12 June 2008                   |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Deanery Road<br>Newham<br>E15 4LP |
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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors carried out observations of two full lessons jointly with senior leaders, and 42 part lessons taught by 40 teachers. Four learning walks comprising short visits to lessons in English, mathematics, science, and learning support were carried out jointly with the leaders of these departments. Meetings were held with students, staff, and three members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation as well as 558 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 145 questionnaires completed by students and 31 completed by staff.

## Information about the school

Sarah Bonnell is a larger than the average-sized girls' comprehensive school. Students come from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Most students live in Newham. The large majority are from minority ethnic groups, mainly from Bangladeshi, Black African, Pakistani and Indian backgrounds. The number of Eastern European students is increasing. A large majority of students speak English as an additional language and include advanced bilingual learners and those at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. Nearly half of the students are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has met and exceeded national 'floor targets' during the past three years. It received specialist language college status in 2003 and is working towards the advanced International School award. The school underwent a major building programme which began in September 2008 and was completed in September 2010.

The headteacher will retire in September 2011. She is working with her successor to bring about a smooth transition in leadership. At the time of the inspection students from Year 11 were on study leave.

**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

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                               | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Achievement</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Teaching</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>                           | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety</b>                                | <b>1</b> |
| Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being? | Yes      |
| Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?     | Yes      |
| Does the school provide value for money?                   | Yes      |

## Key findings

- Sarah Bonnell is a calm, happy and friendly school. A particular strength of the school is the outstanding promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Diversity is valued highly and celebrated by all. A strong commitment to making sure that all students have an equal chance to learn and to become independent, self-confident young women is at the heart of the school's work.
- Students attain examination results that are broadly in line with national averages. Patterns of achievement are uneven across subjects and between year groups. Students' achievement in modern foreign and heritage languages, such as Bengali and Urdu, is outstanding. Underachievement in science is being tackled effectively and current students are on track to attain results that are in line with other subjects.
- Leaders and managers have taken decisive action to improve behaviour, attendance and punctuality as a result of rigorous monitoring. Attendance is well above the national average for all groups of students. Punctuality has improved steadily year on year and is excellent. Students behave exceptionally well in lessons and conduct themselves very responsibly around the school. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and students report that they feel exceptionally safe and that bullying is extremely rare.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving. Many students make satisfactory progress or better, but inconsistencies in the way that learning is assessed during lessons and over time and the quality of feedback students receive, particularly through marking, are holding back achievement from moving from satisfactory to good.
- Assessment data to track students' progress and identify variations in the achievement of different groups are not presented in a way that is easy to interpret and use. Evaluations of achievement and teaching are not being used

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consistently by leaders to bring about improvements. There is variability in how well middle leaders share outstanding teaching.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management are no better than 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 achievement from satisfactory to good or better, particularly in science, by ensuring that:
  - lesson planning includes opportunities for teachers and additional adults to check students' learning as the lesson proceeds
  - students receive clear information about the level they are capable of achieving, the current level at which they are working, and what they need to do to improve through more frequent and higher-quality marking
  - features of outstanding teaching are identified clearly and shared across the school and within departments.
  
- Develop a consistent approach to presenting assessment data to track students' progress which is understood easily by leaders and managers, teachers, additional adults who support learning, students and parents and carers, so that it can be used more effectively.

## Main report

Attainment remains broadly in line with national averages as it was at the last inspection. Significant changes have taken place during the last three years: an extended building programme has created a well-designed, attractive learning environment with extensive new resources and facilities; behaviour, attendance and punctuality have improved steadily year on year as a result of rigorous monitoring; the roles and responsibilities of the school's middle leaders have been developed so that they are playing a greater part in monitoring and evaluating performance in their subject areas; and the deployment of teaching assistants is becoming increasingly focused on supporting learning. The headteacher, supported by senior leaders, has provided strong leadership during a period when there has been considerable disruption to school routines and some significant changes in staffing. She has maintained good staff and student morale. Leaders and managers understand what needs to be done to raise achievement and secure improvement. The school is in a satisfactory position to continue improving to becoming a good school.

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## Particular strengths of the school

- Students hold clear views about their learning and well-being. Their excellent behaviour and punctuality make a very strong contribution to their learning even when teaching is satisfactory. They are very effective in supporting and guiding each other's learning and behaviour.
- Students are proud of the school. They place a high value on the school community because they feel well cared for and supported. They move around the school in a calm and orderly way and respond very positively to visual prompts from staff that encourage them to reflect on the impact of their own behaviour on others.
- The school is very effective in meeting its duties to promote equality and tackle discrimination as students from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds work together and respect each other. Safeguarding is robust. Students confirm that they feel extremely safe and secure and that bullying is very rare and dealt with quickly.
- Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are learning to speak English as an additional language and those who are potentially vulnerable receive personalised intervention and guidance, which makes an important contribution to their quality of learning and allows them to make similar progress to other students and sometimes better progress.
- The specialist language college status builds well on students' rich linguistic backgrounds and celebrates internationalism through a wide range of partnerships. It contributes well to community cohesion and to raising attainment. Students make outstanding progress in modern foreign and heritage languages as a result of the enhanced curriculum and consistently strong teaching.
- Literacy is supported well through developing written and listening skills and mathematical skills are taught well. Students are able to apply a range of skills in information and communication technology, particularly when they are developed as part of the subject being taught.
- Teaching is improving because senior and middle leaders are building up a more detailed and accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and are taking effective action to tackle inconsistencies.
- In the lessons where teaching was judged to be outstanding:
  - teachers used their excellent subject knowledge to deepen students' understanding
  - students were provided with high levels of challenge and learning moved on quickly
  - activities were interactive and thought provoking
  - frequent checks were made on students' learning by teachers and teaching assistants
  - students were given regular feedback using a range of assessment information so that they knew precisely how to improve their work and

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move on to the next level.

- Governance is good. Since the previous inspection the governing body has played a major part in shaping the future of the school and challenges performance vigorously. The governing body has constructive relationships with staff and is becoming involved more strategically in improvement planning.

**Features of the school that make overall effectiveness satisfactory rather than good**

- Achievement is variable across subjects and year groups. For example, students attain higher examination results in modern foreign and heritage languages, drama and statistics than in English, geography and science. Students at Key Stage 3 make satisfactory progress because teaching, marking, and support and guidance are not consistently focused on learning.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate some key aspects of the school's work are well established and actions taken to improve behaviour, attendance and punctuality are based on accurate self-evaluation. However, evaluations of achievement and teaching are not being used consistently to target actions, so weaknesses remain.
- Assessment information to track students' progress against targets at whole-school, departmental and teacher levels is not presented in a way that can be understood easily, so it is not being used consistently to improve students' learning.
- Middle leaders are taking an increasing role in observing the quality of teaching and learning in their departments by short visits to lessons and through scrutinising students' work. However, there is still some variability in how well they identify and share outstanding teaching in their departments and across the school.
- In the lessons where teaching was judged to be satisfactory:
  - work was not matched closely enough to different levels of ability and achievement
  - there was too much teacher direction and insufficient opportunities for independent and collaborative work
  - the pace of learning was too slow
  - students' behaviour was compliant and they did not have sufficient opportunities to interact and engage enthusiastically with their learning
  - students' learning was not checked and consolidated by the teacher or additional adults providing support in the lesson
  - marking of students' work was infrequent or consisted of ticks or comments on presentation or effort with few pointers for improvement.

A minority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires are concerned about standards of behaviour. A few commented that the school does not manage behaviour well and that lessons are disrupted. Inspectors observed excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school. Students show high levels of respect for each other, adults and for the school environment. Behaviour is satisfactory in a

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small minority of lessons when the teaching does not engage students' interests, but does not disrupt learning. Students and staff report good behaviour over time. Students who exhibit challenging behaviour respond very positively to sanctions and rates and patterns of exclusions are low.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sarah Bonnell 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 558 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,189 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements   | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|--|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|  | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| Q1<br>My child is happy at school                                    | 201            | 36 | 324   | 58 | 29       | 5  | 4                 | 1 |
| Q2<br>My child feels safe at school                                  | 222            | 40 | 303   | 54 | 23       | 4  | 7                 | 1 |
| Q3<br>The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can       | 194            | 35 | 318   | 57 | 39       | 7  | 5                 | 1 |
| Q4<br>The school meets my child’s particular needs                   | 144            | 26 | 335   | 60 | 51       | 10 | 6                 | 1 |
| Q5<br>The school ensures my child is well looked after               | 181            | 32 | 334   | 60 | 32       | 6  | 6                 | 1 |
| Q6<br>Teaching at this school is good                                | 159            | 28 | 340   | 61 | 45       | 8  | 8                 | 1 |
| Q7<br>There is a good standard of behaviour at this school           | 98             | 18 | 335   | 60 | 104      | 19 | 15                | 3 |
| Q8<br>Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour                     | 60             | 11 | 301   | 54 | 160      | 29 | 26                | 5 |
| Q9<br>The school deals with any cases of bullying well               | 178            | 32 | 298   | 54 | 56       | 10 | 12                | 2 |
| Q10<br>The school helps me to support my child’s learning            | 161            | 29 | 319   | 57 | 53       | 9  | 10                | 2 |
| Q11<br>The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed | 174            | 31 | 295   | 53 | 60       | 11 | 19                | 3 |
| Q12<br>The school is well led and managed                            | 189            | 34 | 316   | 57 | 32       | 6  | 10                | 2 |

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      | 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 achievement of all pupils.</li> <li>■ Behaviour and safety.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of leadership and management.</li> </ul> <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</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.**



10 June 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Sarah Bonnell School, Newham E15 4LP**

Thank you for the very friendly and polite welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, visiting your lessons and looking around the wonderful new building. You told us that you feel exceptionally safe at school, that you respect each other and get on very well together. You are encouraged to have high aspirations for the future and we were very impressed by your commitment to learning. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Your attendance is well-above average and punctuality is excellent.

Although there are some outstanding things about your school, we judged it to be satisfactory overall because you do not all make consistently good progress and there are some lessons where you do not get enough feedback on your learning. We have asked the school to make sure that you make good or better progress in all subjects, particularly in science. We have asked the teachers to plan activities that allow them to check your understanding during the lesson and to mark your work regularly with comments that tell you how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve your work. We have asked the senior leaders and leaders of learning to track your progress carefully and present their findings in a way that is understood more easily by you, your teachers, adults who support learning in class, and your parents and carers. You can help by telling them what sort of lessons help you learn the most and continuing to work hard.

We were impressed by your enthusiasm for languages, your support for the wide range of clubs and activities that are on offer and all the things you do for the school and the wider community. These activities help you learn valuable skills for your future life as well as being fun. The headteacher, senior leaders, the staff and members of the governing body are committed to keeping you safe, happy and healthy and want you to achieve as much as you can. We wish you all at Sarah Bonnell a happy and successful future.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham  
Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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