

# College Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101182
<b>Local Authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	354953
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	11
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marion Stern
<b>Headteacher</b>	Norman Stromsoy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Castle Lane London SW1E 6DR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons, or parts of lessons, and saw eight teachers. Meetings were held with staff, students and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at students' books, performance data, monitoring and self evaluation records, and documents indicating how well the school safeguards its students. They analysed 21 parental questionnaires, 43 responses from students and 25 from staff.

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

- How well the school meets the needs of the different groups of students, including girls and boys, and whether there are any significant variations in their achievement.
- Whether provision in the sixth form is sufficiently tailored to students' individual needs and provides enough scope for this to be an outstanding aspect of the school's work.
- How effectively middle leaders, including staff with subject responsibilities, and members of the governing body contribute to driving school improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a school for students with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. Over half the students have autistic spectrum disorders; the remainder have mostly speech, language and communication difficulties, and/or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A large majority of students are of minority ethnic heritage, and most of these speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. There are far more boys than girls. The school has Specialist Schools status for Communication and Interaction, the Inclusion Quality Mark, Sports Mark and National Healthy Schools (Enhanced) status.

An executive headteacher leads this school and the other special school in the London Borough of Westminster. The two schools are in a soft federation with two separate governing bodies; plans are under way for them to enter into a hard federation under one governing body in January 2012. On a day-to-day basis, College Park is led and managed by a head of school. The school has spent two years in temporary accommodation; it is expected that it will move into new purpose-built accommodation on its usual site during the autumn term 2011. A team of staff based at College Park provide preventative outreach support and training to a large number of mainstream schools across the borough. Since the previous inspection, the school has extended its age range from 16 to 19: its post-16 provision is located in St Marylebone Sixth Form College.

**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

This is an outstanding school. The executive headteacher provides inspirational and visionary leadership, and is supported exceptionally well by the head of school and assistant headteacher. Senior leaders and members of the governing body have very high expectations and are extremely outward looking. They have developed highly effective and innovative partnerships with businesses, other educational establishments and organisations to greatly extend opportunities open to students. The school has an excellent track record of improvement and has developed significantly since the last inspection. Leaders work continuously to drive improvement and make provision as good as possible for students. Sharply focused monitoring and detailed self-evaluation ensure that the school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is outstanding and the school makes the most of its location in central London to give students many exciting and memorable experiences. These contribute a great deal to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Another important factor in this is the excellent care, guidance and support that the school provides. This results in students who are a credit to the school. They are polite and courteous, apply themselves exceptionally well and their behaviour is outstanding. The school's excellent attention to safeguarding ensures that students feel very safe and secure. Provision in the sixth form is of high quality. Being located at St Marylebone Sixth Form College affords students at post-16 outstanding opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers, and to take part in a wide range of stimulating activities.

Outcomes for students are excellent because they make good progress in their learning and many aspects of their personal development are outstanding. Good teaching ensures that students achieve well and there are examples of some who have made exceptional gains in their learning. This is particularly the case in Years 10 and 11, where students meet with a high level of success in a range of courses matched closely to their individual needs. Teaching is nearly always at least good and it is outstanding in some areas. Throughout the school, teaching includes a number of consistent strengths. In addition, where lessons are outstanding or have elements that are exceptionally good, learning proceeds at a rapid pace and dynamic teaching provides constant challenge. Activities are matched closely to the next steps in learning for each student, and teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in building on individual responses so that they miss no opportunity to develop students' communication skills. While these features are not found in all lessons, the school has rigorous systems in place for monitoring and improving teaching, and senior leaders work very closely with less experienced staff to develop their skills.

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

- Build on existing strengths in teaching and learning and raise students' achievement by:
  - ensuring tasks are always matched closely to the next steps in learning for individuals
  - developing the skills of less experienced staff in building on students' responses and drawing out their communication
  - ensuring all teaching has the pace and dynamism found in the best lessons.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Most students meet, and some exceed, their challenging targets. Many do exceptionally well in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form to gain a number of qualifications at Entry Level, BTEC, GCSE and in Functional Skills. Assessment records, students' work and progress in lessons show that achievement is equally good for all groups, including girls and boys. All students develop a range of learning skills that support their learning very well. This is particularly evident in English, art and design, and drama. In an outstanding English lesson, Year 9 students concentrated exceptionally well and worked at a rapid pace, reading for information, discussing and formulating their views in order to write about the life and work of Roald Dahl. In art, students produce some highly finished pieces of work that show they have made excellent progress in selecting and combining imagery, as in a large-scale piece on display entitled 'Asiana'. Furthermore, the school's success in art has been recognised, with students exhibiting their work in prestigious London venues and selling artwork in a commercial gallery.

Students' behaviour is outstanding: they show a high level of self-control and a mature understanding of the school's values. This was revealed when a student said, 'The school is like a little family, we all know one another and look after each other.' Other students agreed that they feel very safe because bullying is simply 'not accepted' and 'any problems are sorted'. Students demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. Their imagination and creativity are fired by a wide-ranging arts curriculum. They explore sensitive topics in drama and express themselves confidently through involvement in visual arts activities, such as the London photography project and film-making. They enjoy school a great deal, show curiosity about the world around them and are reflective when discussing their own and others' experiences. Students readily take part in a wide range of sporting activities, respond very well to the school's promotion of healthy eating and gain greatly in their knowledge of how to look after their mental as well as physical health. They take responsibility as members of the school council and as prefects and some have helped to interview prospective teaching staff. Older students take a very active role as volunteers in leading extended school activities, working with the local parks department, a nearby caf, in an old people's home and through the Jack Petchey Award Scheme. Students' good progress in basic skills and their average attendance mean that they are well prepared for the future. In addition, they develop many excellent personal qualities and gain valuable enterprise and vocational skills that should stand them in very good stead.

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*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>	
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:	3
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	
<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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school, teachers have very good relationships with their students and convey high expectations for their work and behaviour. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and staff use a wide range of methods to match tasks to students' individual needs. As a result, students are nearly always fully engaged in learning. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and exciting, often inspired by teachers' excellent subject knowledge and their skill in making new concepts accessible to students. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning in many lessons and students' individual targets help to focus support. At times, the pace of learning drops in a few lessons and staff miss opportunities to build on students' contributions to take their learning forward.

An outstanding curriculum and high quality care, guidance and support are central to the school's effectiveness. A strong emphasis on the development of students' basic skills, including reading, writing and numeracy, is complemented by a superb range of enrichment opportunities. This is made possible through the school's partnership with an extensive range of organisations, for example Tate Modern, the Serpentine Gallery, Paddington Arts, Wigmore Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, Sports Mobility, Sport England, the Special Olympics, the English National Opera and the Royal Ballet. In addition, since the

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last inspection, the school has developed an expansive range of after-school clubs, and a day and residential summer play scheme in order to meet students' learning and personal needs as fully as possible.

Staff have an in-depth knowledge of each student through the school's finely tuned pastoral system. Outstanding procedures for managing behaviour ensure that students learn in a very calm and orderly environment. This belies the fact that many join the school with behavioural difficulties. Very thorough systems support students when they join the school and when they move into the sixth form or prepare for leaving. The school works with a wide range of professionals, including therapists and other agencies, to ensure resources and the learning environment fully meet students' needs. For example, it makes extensive use of visual timetables and other specialist techniques for students with autistic spectrum disorders. Tailor-made support for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable is of very high quality. Special activities and support for girls ensures that they are fully included and have their personal needs met. The family support worker works very closely with the parents and carers of students who need additional help. Students' attendance has improved as a result of very close monitoring and work with individual families.

*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	2
<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?

Despite working in temporary accommodation which has presented the school with a number of additional challenges for the past two years, the drive for improvement has been continuous. Senior leaders seek every possible opportunity to expand the experiences open to students. They make the most of the school's specialist status and have forged a range of excellent, and some very enterprising, partnerships with external bodies. The federation of the two special schools in Westminster means that the executive headteacher is able to take a strategic view about the development of provision. For example, he is currently working in collaboration with a national training provider to establish an enterprise centre that will offer training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities for 16 to 19 year olds with special educational needs and/or disabilities across the borough. Through an extensive outreach and training programme that is very well received, staff from College Park provide support that benefits hundreds of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in mainstream schools.

Senior leaders are equally rigorous in working to improve the quality of provision within the school. Staff have undergone training in 'what an outstanding lesson at College Park looks like' and a series of detailed teaching and learning 'standards' set out very high

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expectations for all aspects of teachers' work. Together with much ongoing support to some relatively inexperienced teachers, this is helping to raise the quality of teaching. Middle leaders, including those responsible for subjects, are highly committed to making provision as good as possible and have contributed to school improvement especially through their work in developing the curriculum. Monitoring is very thorough and self-evaluation focuses precisely on the next steps to move the school forward. Careful analysis of data and tracking of students' progress ensure that all groups have equal opportunities and the school is very active in tackling discrimination. Staff work very closely with parents and carers and the school has provided a wide range of workshops to increase their understanding of how to support their children's learning. The governing body plays a key role in strategic development, setting ambitious targets, and its members share senior leaders' vision for making the school a centre of excellence in all aspects of its work. The governing body is well informed and has good systems in place for gathering information about the day-to-day workings of the school.

The school pays outstanding attention to ensuring that all students are safeguarded. Its very clear policies and procedures are finely tuned to the school's circumstances. The temporary accommodation is managed exceptionally well to ensure students' safety is not compromised. The school has excellent links with outside agencies and provides, for example, counselling and a range of extended activities to keep boys whose circumstances make them vulnerable away from the influence of gangs. The school promotes community cohesion well. A detailed development plan for extending this aspect of the schools' work, including through establishing global links, reflects a thorough understanding of its context. The promotion of local community cohesion is already exceptionally good and provides students with excellent opportunities to contribute to the world around them. The school is a very harmonious community where students from different backgrounds respect one another and get on very well.

*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	1
<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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>



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## Sixth form

The location of the sixth form within St Marylebone Sixth Form College provides College Park students with outstanding opportunities to integrate with their mainstream peers. College Park staff work very closely in liaison with their mainstream colleagues to make the most of this opportunity for both sets of students. Provision is tailored exceptionally well to students' individual needs and a subtle combination of support and challenge enables them to make rapid gains in confidence. Assessment records show that a number of students have made excellent progress in their learning. Students say that the provision is 'brilliant' and talk with enthusiasm about the activities available to them and their hopes for the future. Leadership by the teacher in charge and senior leaders is visionary. They have detailed and innovative plans to extend post-16 opportunities even further through the extension of vocational and work-related opportunities.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire express a high level of satisfaction with the school's work. They are particularly pleased with the way the school keeps their children safe, keeps them informed, takes account of their suggestions and meets their children's needs. They appreciate the good quality teaching and the support that is provided. There were very few written comments and no criticisms that needed to be followed up by the inspection team. Inspection findings endorse parents' and carers' positive views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at College Park 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	43	9	43	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	57	9	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	33	13	62	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	48	11	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	48	11	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	29	15	71	0	0	0	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)	8	38	11	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	38	12	57	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	48	11	52	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	43	12	57	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	52	11	52	0	0	0	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

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 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.**



18 July 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of College Park School, London SW1E 6DR**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, watching your lessons and looking at your work. You told us how much you enjoy school and your parents and carers who filled in the questionnaire are very happy with the school's work. So you will not be surprised to know that we found College Park is an outstanding school.

Here are a few of the very best things we found in your school.

- Your teachers plan lots of interesting things for you to do and you have some fantastic opportunities to take part in all sorts of events during and after school.
- The staff care for you exceptionally well.
- You are a credit to the school; you are polite and friendly and your behaviour is excellent.
- You make a very good contribution to your school and the local community.
- You told us how safe you feel at school and how you are confident that if you have a problem an adult will help you to solve it.
- Your school is led exceptionally well and all the staff and governors want to make it as good as possible for you.

Even in an outstanding school, there is room for improvement. To help your school get even better, we have asked your teachers to make sure all your lessons are as exciting as the best ones. We have also asked them to match the things they ask you to do and the way they support you even more carefully to the next steps in your learning.

You can help your school by continuing to work really hard in lessons and always coming to school regularly. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Goodchild

Lead inspector

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