

Eleanor Smith School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102793
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	355261
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Blackband

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Tritton
Headteacher	Graham Smith
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 June 2008
School address	North Street Plaistow London E13 9HN
Telephone number	020 8471 0018
Fax number	020 8472 1388
Email address	graham.smith@eleanorsmith.newham.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed six lessons and six teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, a representative from a mainstream school, representatives from the range of outside providers and the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including all safeguarding procedures, the school's data on the performance and well-being of the pupils, material about curriculum organisation and the monitoring of teaching and learning, and the minutes and proceedings of the school's development planning and governing body meetings. In addition, the inspector took into account 20 parents' and carers' questionnaires, 34 staff questionnaires and 28 pupils' questionnaires.

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

- Whether pupils from all ethnic groups and those with additional special needs are making the best progress that they can, how well the school monitors this, and how well it intervenes with extra support if appropriate.
- Whether standards of behaviour and attendance are high enough and to what extent they help the pupils' learning.
- How effectively the school meets the needs of each pupil by using assessment to plan lessons and adapting the curriculum.
- Whether leaders at all levels successfully monitor, evaluate and improve provision and outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Eleanor Smith is a split-site school that provides full- and part-time places for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in both primary and secondary phases. The vast majority of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Primary-aged pupils attend at the Plaistow site on a part-time placement for three days each week and these pupils also have a mainstream school place. A few pupils attend on a full-time basis because their mainstream placement has broken down. The primary site also accommodates secondary pupils in Year 7. The secondary pupils in Years 8 to 11 attend the Beckton site. Pupils attend part-time in Years 8 and 9 and full-time in Years 10 and 11, when they take up an alternative vocational curriculum with outside providers. The pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the make-up of the borough. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There are very few girls.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Eleanor Smith is a good school. It is very ably and enthusiastically led by the headteacher, supported by an experienced senior team. Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial improvements, especially to the curriculum for older pupils and in the quality of writing the pupils produce. Care, support and guidance are outstanding. Pupils feel very safe and flourish in the supportive environment. Parents and carers have a high regard for the school. The school has improved on the levels of pupils' progress since the previous inspection and this contributes to the successful reintegration of the very large majority back into full-time mainstream education. The attendance of almost all pupils has substantially improved compared to when they were in mainstream schools and it is above average. This, coupled with the fact that pupils' behaviour is good, which is another significant improvement since their entry to the school, reflects the pupils' enjoyment of their school life and their positive attitudes towards their learning and the other pupils.

The pupils make good progress in both primary and secondary phases. By the time they return to mainstream education, their attainment is broadly average. Older pupils gain nationally accredited qualifications in English and mathematics and in a range of vocational skills. This enables them to move confidently on to college courses when they leave school. A very strong feature of the school is the tolerance and respect the pupils show to each other. Pupils celebrate the diversity of the school and local population very well and this contributes outstandingly well to the pupils' awareness of their community and to the cohesiveness of the school.

The good progress is underpinned by good teaching in both departments and by a curriculum which is adapted well to the pupils' needs. There is good provision for learning the basic skills of English and mathematics and these skills are effectively integrated into themes and topics linked by key objectives, such as 'getting on together'. This ensures that while national curriculum schemes are fully covered, enabling a generally smooth transfer back into mainstream, the pupils gain a firm understanding of the social and moral aspects of their learning. The assessment of pupils' work is good. On occasion, however, their targets are too generalised and take insufficient account of the small steps in the pupils' learning. As a result, a few activities are not sufficiently adapted to take account of the pupils' differing abilities. The feedback pupils receive on their work is occasionally not clear and does not always help pupils to improve their work. This can slow down the pace of learning.

The school's leaders are rigorous in monitoring each aspect of provision and unrelentingly focus their efforts on helping the pupils improve their attainment and personal skills. Leaders' self-evaluation is effective and there is a culture throughout

the school of always 'trying to do it better'. The governing body is active and effective in monitoring the school's performance and in challenging the staff to improve further. As a result of successful monitoring, the school's development planning is detailed and firmly rooted in the pupils' well-being and progress. The school has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate rates of progress for all pupils by:
 - providing learning targets and activities which are focused precisely to their individual learning needs and abilities
 - ensuring the pupils receive clear oral and written feedback so they know how to improve their work further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The pupils generally enter with attainment that is substantially below average. By the time they leave either to go back to mainstream or to college, this has improved and their attainment is not significantly different from that of mainstream pupils. This represents good progress for all ethnic groups and for those with additional needs. The few girls make as much progress as the boys. The pupils make particularly good progress in English because of well-organised intensive teaching for individuals and groups. This has ensured that reading standards, and especially writing standards, an issue identified in the previous inspection, have improved consistently. This opens the door for pupils to take full advantage of a whole range of learning activities. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson, the pupils produced persuasive advertising materials for a theme park. They had used drafts and discussion to refine their efforts and had created extremely powerful rich language to express their ideas. The pupils cooperated well and responded with enthusiasm to the teacher's guidance. There was great enjoyment of their finished work and a conscious team effort. The pupils not only made good progress in written and oral English but reinforced their social and behavioural skills effectively. Pupils are very pleased with their progress. They enjoy using their skills and their self-confidence soars. As a result, they are well prepared to benefit from their mainstream placement when they go back. Pupils approaching the end of their school career are motivated by, and enjoy, the range of vocational courses on offer to them. Their attendance for the most part is above average and they gain a range of qualifications in basic skills and in their chosen vocational subjects. Every Year 11 pupil showed the improvement in their enjoyment of learning by moving on to a college course in 2011.

Most pupils have a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy healthy school meals and take part in a range of physical activities. Primary pupils particularly enjoy their modern dance sessions and football training provided by professional artists and sportsmen. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe. They respond very well to the school's work in personal, health and social education and to the consistent support from staff for their emotional well-being. They feel very safe at school and this has a very positive impact on their attitudes to learning. Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding exceptionally well while at Eleanor Smith. Behaviour is generally good

and represents significant improvement from previous schools. Lessons take place in a calm, harmonious environment. The pupils enjoy the lessons and work very well in partnership with the other pupils. They have learnt they can show pride and contribute very well to the school’s development, for example through making suggestions about learning and well-being. They raise funds for charities and contribute to concerts given for the local community. They have a strong appreciation of the diversity and cohesion within the school. Their good progress in basic skills and the development of their skills in helping each other and working together, together with good opportunities for vocational study and work experience, equip the pupils well for the next stages in their education.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The good teaching is underpinned by the strength of the relationships in classrooms. Lessons are characterised by the lively interesting activities, which result in the good concentration and motivation of the pupils. Teachers plan effectively and make use of good quality resources. They are able, with the teaching assistants, to provide a very high level of individual support to pupils where necessary. This gives the pupils confidence to try new things and sometimes make mistakes. The quality of this support is very influential in promoting the pupils’ progress, particularly those with additional needs, and in developing positive attitudes to their learning. On occasion, teachers do not plan some of the activities carefully enough for each pupil and this can result in frustration, though behaviour remains acceptable. At times, teachers do not give sufficient guidance to pupils when marking their work so they do not always know how to take the next step in their learning.

The curriculum is rigorously monitored to ensure it fits in appropriately with that

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

found in mainstream. English and mathematics are well organised throughout the school and this has a positive effect on pupils’ enjoyment and achievement. There is a consistent emphasis on the emotional and behavioural development of the pupils. In most lessons, the pupils are encouraged to consider the moral and social aspects of their learning and this effectively supports their citizenship skills and ability to regulate their own behaviour. Secondary pupils work with subject specialists and outside providers in a growing range of subjects. While these meet their needs, activities are not finely tailored to the wide range of pupils. Despite the limitations of the facilities on the secondary site, staff have ensured that pupils have an extensive choice of challenging and interesting courses. Pupils’ strong appreciation of the diversity and the cohesion of the school is further reinforced through the celebration of the different cultures found at the school, for instance, in ‘Black History Month’, in visits to the local community and further afield to many London institutions such as Madame Tussaud’s. The pupils’ community and cultural experience is extended further through annual residential trips.

The pupils are well known to all the adults. Concerns are immediately made known to all staff in daily briefings. The staff work together extremely effectively to provide outstanding care and support for pupils. The school maintains excellent supportive relations with parents and carers to ensure the pupils’ well-being and it works in close partnership with the various health and social care professionals in the borough. Support is tailored sensitively and very effectively to meet the needs of the more vulnerable pupils, such as those in public care. Transition arrangements and liaison with mainstream schools are very good. Pupils and receiving schools are fully informed about changes and this helps ensure most pupils make secure and confident returns to mainstream schools. Older pupils are carefully guided into suitable GCSEs and vocational courses. The school makes determined attempts to reduce absence and has increased the pupils’ attendance by a very substantial margin compared to when they were at mainstream schools. The staff make good use of ‘reflection time’. This system of individual counselling is very effective in helping pupils understand the consequences of their actions and how to make amends. Pupils’ spiritual, social and moral understanding benefits substantially as a result.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his senior team have been key to the consistent improvements to the school. Provision is well organised and efficient. Staff are very clear on their roles and how to improve their work, as a result of rigorous but constructive monitoring of their performance. Morale is high and this is reflected in the

enthusiasm of all adults to provide the best teaching and care for the pupils. Through effective self-evaluation and detailed development planning, the senior team has effectively sustained progress. There are comprehensive systems to track the pupils’ progress and well-being. This enables staff to maintain a good overview of provision and to detect where provision needs to improve or where pupils are not doing as well as they should. This has a good impact on the school’s determination to promote equal opportunities for every pupil.

Governance is good. The governing body is influential and supportive. It is especially vigilant in monitoring the effectiveness of policies and procedures. There are outstanding safeguarding arrangements. Staff are regularly updated on child protection and restraint procedures and there are excellent procedures to ensure that all adults are appropriately vetted before coming onto the site. The pupils have good relationships with adults and feel confident to talk to someone if necessary. Parents and carers have every confidence in the school and relations with parents and carers are excellent. There is a very high level of communication and parents and carers are fully consulted about any change in their child’s behaviour or levels of progress. The flourishing Parents’ Group has a full programme of activities throughout the year. Partnerships with other schools and providers are excellent. The success in reintegrating pupils illustrates the high quality of partnership work between schools and with outside providers. These partnership arrangements work very positively to promote the pupils’ achievements and add good value to the school’s overall provision.

The tolerant and supportive ethos of the school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion in the school. The school very effectively promotes the pupils’ understanding of the diversity they find locally and in the wider London area, as well as gaining a good understanding of communities in other regions and countries.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

An average number of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Parents and carers value the school and its effect on their children's education and well-being. They particularly felt that the school meets their child's particular needs and that the school deals effectively with behaviour. They agreed that the school is well led and managed. One parent commented, 'My son has been in this school for a year now and has had no problems, just a few blips. Any time anything happens, I am informed and told what has happened and will happen. My son is getting on so well now, I wish he had been placed here earlier.' A very small proportion of parents and carers had concerns that the school does not meet their child's needs and that their child was not making enough progress. The inspector did not investigate specific individual cases but found these areas to be good in the school as a whole.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Eleanor Smith 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 inspector received 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 44 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	7	35	10	50	3	15	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	55	8	40	1	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	12	60	7	35	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	50	7	35	2	10	1	5
The teaching is good at this school	12	60	6	30	1	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	12	60	8	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	60	7	35	1	5	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)	11	55	8	40	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	14	70	4	20	2	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	70	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	65	6	30	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	70	5	25	1	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	14	70	5	25	1	5	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and 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.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eleanor Smith School, London, E13 9HN

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited you a short time ago. I enjoyed talking with you in classrooms and at lunchtime. I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school. There are very many positive things to tell you about the school. Here are some of the main judgements I made:

- You make good progress in your reading, writing and numeracy skills, and this helps you to fit back in to your mainstream school and do as well as everyone else.
- You make good progress in your behaviour and attendance. This is important because when you attend regularly and behave well, you learn much faster.
- You make good progress in your personal skills. The school is a happy place because you all try hard to get on. You make excellent progress in learning about right and wrong and how to respect other people.
- You are taught well. Lessons are interesting and older pupils especially get a range of worthwhile courses that will lead to college and, hopefully, a good job.
- The adults look after you very well. The support you are given is excellent and you receive very good guidance about going back to your mainstream schools or on to college.
- Your headteacher and his staff run the school effectively and this makes sure you can learn well.

To help you make even better progress, I have asked the staff to do two main things:

- Give you learning targets and lesson activities which are closely linked to what you can and cannot do.
- Give you a clearer idea of how well you are doing and how to improve your work.

You can help, of course, by thinking about feedback you are given, working hard and continuing to behave well.

Yours sincerely

Mel Blackband
Lead inspector

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