

Prendergast Ladywell Fields College

Manwood Road, London, SE4 1SA

Inspection dates 11–12 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching varies within and between subjects. Some teachers do not mark students' books regularly, tell students how to improve their work or plan work that matches students' different abilities.
- Behaviour in the corridors is occasionally boisterous, although many pupils are polite and considerate. In lessons, behaviour is generally appropriate but occasionally it is not good enough.
- Despite an improving trend in standards overall, students do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects, including design and technology, music and a few science courses.
- Some of the initiatives to generate fast improvement have not been in place long enough to speed up students' progress in all subjects.
- Leaders collect a wealth of data on students' progress but do not always use it well to improve the rates of progress and to check that the all pupil premium money has been spent effectively.
- Some students, mostly in Years 7 to 9, do not read or write well enough. A few teachers do not focus enough on how accurately students write.

The school has the following strengths

- The governing body has strengthened the senior leadership team and appointed enthusiastic teachers. Senior leaders are clear where improvements are needed and are making a difference.
- The percentage of students attaining five GCSE A*-C grades including English and mathematics has gone up.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved
- The school has achieved national recognition for its citizenship work in the local community and is rightly proud of its success in a range of sports.
- Students feel safe at school. Safeguarding procedures are fully in place.
- The school works well with parents, the governing body and the local authority.
- The school's popularity is growing and the

because new leadership has made a big difference to how well students learn.

attendance for most groups of students has improved.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 39 part-lessons, some with members of the senior leadership team. They attended an assembly and tutor group sessions in the morning.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, heads of department, members of the pastoral team, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, some parents and several groups of students.
- The inspection team examined a range of school documentation including information about pupil exclusions and attendance, performance management evaluations, and the quality of pupils' work. The school self-evaluation document was also considered.
- The inspection team considered the views of 23 parents and carers who responded to Parent View. It also considered the views of 40 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Kevin Morris, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Pamela Fearnely	Additional inspector
Clare Gillies	Additional inspector
Gill Walley	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Prendergast Ladywell Fields College is a smaller than average secondary school.
- It is part of the Leathersellers' Federation of Schools which is led by an executive headteacher who delegates the day-to-day management of the school to the headteacher; both are accountable to the governing body.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average with Black British Caribbean and Black British African pupils representing the largest groups in the school. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The number of students entering the school after Year 7 is high.
- Staff turnover was high in recent years, particularly between the end of the last academic year and September 2012.
- The school is a specialist arts college.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise standards and accelerate progress, improve the quality of teaching, especially in Years 7 to 9, to at least good by the end of the academic year by:
 - telling students (by marking and discussion in lessons) how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work
 - giving students time to discuss their work and share ideas together in lessons
 - exploring subject-specific and wider vocabulary and setting longer written exercises, particularly in Years 7 to 9
 - matching work more closely to students' different abilities and starting points, for example giving higher attainers more difficult tasks and deploying other adults effectively to support learning
 - asking questions that make students think and require more than a one-word answers
 - showing students how work fits into subjects as a whole and how it is relevant to real life.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - sharpening up how data are recorded and analysed so that it reveals which groups and individual students are not making the expected progress
 - developing teachers' understanding of what effective teaching looks like through sharing the pockets of outstanding practice that already exist and improving the skills and expertise of teachers new to their posts
 - making sure teachers follow the school's homework and marking procedures
 - evaluating whether all the pupil premium money has been spent on the right support or whether some of it should be used differently

- speeding the review of the behaviour policy and checking the new arrangements are followed by all staff.
- Improve the attendance of pupils with special educational needs and those entitled to the pupil premium in order to speed up their achievement

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- GCSE results improved considerably in 2011, although the percentage of students attaining five A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics remained below average in 2011 and 2012. Some students with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they should, in part because a number of them do not attend regularly.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium attain standards similar to these students nationally but the gap between their results and others is not narrowing sufficiently, partly because a number of them also have poor attendance.
- Black British African students attain higher GCSE results than Black British Caribbean and White British students and make better progress than others, although in current lessons there is no discernible difference in the progress of these groups. Some lack confidence and find writing difficult.
- In GCSE mathematics in 2012, students made at least the expected progress and many exceeded this, achieving a higher percentage of A*/A grades than in 2011 because these students are well taught. GCSE results improved a little in the humanities but declined slightly in several other subjects.
- Progress is better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9, although the variability of standards and progress in different subjects was seen in all years, reflecting the quality of teaching. Strong leadership, careful monitoring and use of data, imaginative resources and high expectations are evident in those subjects that achieve the best learning.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The appointment of a large number of talented teachers, several of whom are new to the profession, has already improved students' learning and progress but the impact of their work on raising standards is taking a while to emerge.
- In the very best lessons, teachers plan for different groups of students by taking into account their starting points. They build students' confidence and self-esteem by using praise. They skilfully remind students what they have learned before and demand high-quality work. As a result, students make rapid progress.
- In lessons where progress was rapid and sustained, which includes mathematics, geography and drama, standards are high. For example, in a lesson on Macbeth, students were very mature working together on a performance for a local festival. They had a good knowledge of the play, performed and spoke blank verse with confidence, had flair, used movement, voice and gesture with precision and were able to evaluate their own and others' work critically and with insight.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not give students clear instructions about what they need to do or they talk for too long before students start work on their own.
- Some teachers help students to learn from their mistakes, write detailed comments in their books and consider the quality of each other's work. This is not consistently the case, especially in Years 7 to 9, where teachers often do not grade or mark students' work well enough.
- Most teachers set homework but students do not always remember to write it down and just occasionally it is mundane, such as 'Finish off classwork'.
- The elements of teaching that require improvement include:
 - giving higher-ability students harder work (even in classes that group students by their ability)
 - using data to plan work that will improve students' understanding
 - guiding other adults to know exactly what help individual students need
 - asking open-ended questions which make students think.
- Senior leaders do not make sure that every teacher gives a high enough priority to improving students' reading, writing and the presentation of their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Around the school, pupils' behaviour is generally acceptable, although not always, particularly at lunchtime, and a few students do not show respect for members of staff. On other occasions, it is much better; for example, in a Year 11 assembly, students' behaviour was exemplary - they came into and out of the hall silently and showed respect for others.
- In lessons, students often behave well when the teaching is interesting. When this is not the case, their interest and attention wanes, resulting occasionally in low-level disruption.
- Most students are punctual in the morning, but a few are late for lessons, which can prevent teachers from making a swift start. In partnership with parents, teachers and senior leaders are beginning to tackle this issue effectively.
- Attendance since September 2012 has improved over the last two years when it was too low. Students with special educational needs and eligible for the pupil premium attend less regularly than others.
- In all years, students who were interviewed said they feel safe. Year 7 students have settled in quickly and do not feel that they have been bullied, or that bullying is a major issue. The few examples of name-calling have been dealt with immediately. Students understand about different types of bullying, such as homophobic or e-bullying. Parents also feel that the school takes strong and decisive action to ensure that all students are safe and secure.
- Students show respect for the different ethnic groups in the school. The school uses every opportunity to promote harmony and equal opportunities. The school is using Black History Month, for example, to discuss the importance of significant black leaders and has introduced an essay competition about the importance of diversity.
- Tutor time and assemblies, religious education and personal, social and health education lessons, combined with the school's strong focus on citizenship, all make a valuable contribution to developing students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. Students discuss controversial and important social and moral issues. Their cultural development is supported by the school's arts specialism.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 receive good information and guidance about the next stage of their education, whether further study, employment or apprenticeships. Many students continue their education within the federation or neighbouring colleges.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher, the executive headteacher and the senior leadership team have firm ambitions which they convey to staff clearly. They have made an impact already on improving GCSE results. By carefully considering the recruitment of employees, the school has attracted new and talented staff who have all signed up to the journey of improvement. This still has some way to go because:
 - a few of the arrangements to achieve consistency in how middle leaders and teachers improve students' learning rapidly have only been introduced recently
 - the presentation and interpretation of data are not always precise enough so that staff can use it to drive forward improvements in learning particularly in Years 7 to 9.
 - a minority of middle leaders do not regularly look at students' work and provide feedback to teachers on what needs to be improved.
- Leaders and the governing body have not yet analysed in detail how the pupil premium was allocated and the difference it has made, so they cannot be sure where it has been most successful. Nevertheless, some students have benefited from intensive support to improve their reading. While the school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind, it is not yet providing complete equality of opportunity as all groups of pupils are not achieving as well as each other.

However, the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and others is closing and is broadly in line with national averages.

- Regular lesson observations are part of the arrangements for managing the performance of staff. Senior leaders accurately evaluate lessons and weigh up the strengths and weak areas. This level of accuracy has helped them to tackle the weak teaching in the past and contributed to the improved standards since the last inspection.
- Parents' responses in the small sample who completed the Parent View questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. They stressed the safe and caring aspect of the school and feel that their children are well supported. Responses to the staff questionnaires were mixed. They generally feel well led but do not feel behaviour is consistently good.
- There is already some high-quality training which involves teachers across the federation. It is helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- The local authority has a good knowledge of the school, supports the federation and is providing practical help and guidance to generate further improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - meetings are conducted efficiently and decisions reached are thoroughly documented in the minutes with clear actions and timelines. This means that the governing body is now working efficiently. There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection and the federation has contributed to them.
 - the governing body meets all statutory requirements and is now holding school leaders to account more rigorously for the school's performance. However, governors do not challenge the school regularly enough to drive improvements more quickly and to be sure that the school provides good value for money.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100747
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	404734

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	811
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Cooke
Headteacher	Mel Whitfield
Date of previous school inspection	7 8 2010
Telephone number	020 8690 1114
Fax number	020 8314 8590
Email address	admin@ladywellfieldscollege.lewisham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

