

# Sarah Bonnell School

Deanery Road, Newham, London, E15 4LP

**Inspection dates** 7–8 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students make good progress and achieve well.
- The percentage of students gaining five good passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics, has risen markedly over the past three years. This was from a very low baseline. It is now above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. It has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers plan creative and enjoyable lessons.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is consistently well above average.
- The school knows its students extremely well and provides them with exceptional care and support.
- Students benefit from a wide range of subjects and enrichment activities. Well-established partnerships with other institutions are used well to enhance learning.
- Leaders at all levels have worked hard to secure continuous improvement over a sustained period. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are highly effective. There is a sharp and accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas to develop further.
- Staff and students are extremely positive about all aspects of the school, including governance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, some teachers do not give work that sufficiently stretches all students.
- Marking is not of a uniformly high enough standard throughout the school because not all teachers write helpful comments on how to improve work, and some teachers do not mark regularly.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 50 lessons taught by 40 teachers. Two observations were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, looked at work in students’ books and studied information about how well the students are making progress. They reviewed safeguarding documentation and systems, school policies and records of the school’s actions. This included the school’s self-evaluation and reports from the local authority.
- Discussions were held with members of staff, members of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to many students in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes. They also spoke formally to three groups of students, including the student leadership team.
- Inspectors observed a number of students read in lessons, and in special reading sessions that the school holds each day. They also listened to eight students read during break on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of parents and carers who contacted the inspection provider.

## Inspection team

Liz Duffy, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Ogugua Okolo-Angus	Additional inspector
Omar Ganie	Additional inspector
Jalil Shaikh	Additional inspector
Babrul Matin	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Sarah Bonnell School is larger than the average-sized girls' comprehensive school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much higher than average. (This is funding available for students known to be eligible for free school meals, students in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed forces). There are currently no students at the school from service families.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is slightly higher than average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE examinations.
- The school has specialist status for languages and holds a number of awards in recognition of its work. These include Artsmark, Healthy School, International School, and Quality in Study Support status.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher took up post in September 2011 and the leadership teams have been restructured. The school does not have any alternative provision.

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

- Further raise achievement through ensuring that more teaching is outstanding, and eradicating the little remaining teaching that requires improvement, by:
  - consistently giving all students work that stretches them to maximise their learning
  - being explicit with success criteria so that students are aided to reflect on their learning
  - providing a range of opportunities for independent and collaborative work
  - marking regularly and to a consistently high standard so that students can easily identify what went well and the next steps for improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Until recently, students entered the school with attainment that was typically well below average. Standards of attainment on entry have been increasing, so that the current Year 7 and Year 8 entered broadly in line with the national average. Over time, standards have improved, and now students leave at the end of Year 11 with above-average attainment.
- Most groups make good progress. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress, except for a small number of students in Key Stage 3 who are supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, whose progression in numeracy is not as strong.
- Some more-able students have been limited in reaching the highest grades in GCSE by the early-entry policy in mathematics because they have not had the opportunity to refine their skills at the highest level. This policy has now been discontinued.
- Students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress and perform in line with their peers. The school makes good use of this funding to set up one-to-one and small-group tuition sessions and to afford these students additional opportunities, such as visits, to widen their educational experience.
- From school evaluations and from the small sample who responded via Parent View, parents and carers agree that their children learn well and are making good progress.
- Progress in reading is good. Library staff monitor the number of books on loan, which shows that many students make good use of the library. The range of reading programmes, including older students reading with younger students, ensures that they enjoy a variety of reading, both fiction and non-fiction.
- The high quality of work in students' books, and the progress seen in lessons, confirm that students in all year groups are achieving well.
- Students work hard, and are interested and keen to improve and refine their work. They show exceptional resilience in taking the initiative in solving problems and in supporting and helping each other. Their high aspirations and willingness to work hard prepare them well for the next stage of education or employment.
- The school's data show that the progress of students continues to improve this year and that attainment is set to rise even further.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good across the school and well on the way to becoming outstanding. Outstanding teaching was seen in all key stages and across a range of subjects, including English, art, geography, physical education, religious education, design and technology, science, music, and personal, social and health education.
- In the best lessons, a variety of strategies are used to challenge students and to reinforce learning. This was exemplified well in a number of lessons, including a Year 7 English class on Shakespeare. More-able students used difficult excerpts from the play to debate with confidence whether Macbeth should kill King Duncan. Equally high standards are present in art. In one Year 7 lesson, students spoke cogently as to how professional artists influenced their multimedia portraiture.
- Many lessons contribute well to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Time is built in for reflection and consideration of moral issues. An excellent Year 9 assembly was inspirational in its consideration of women's rights, using up-to-date news stories to convey its message.
- In the small number of lessons where teaching is less strong, it is due to learning being limited by tasks not having the right level of challenge. Occasionally, too much teacher talk results in

students listening passively and consequently losing interest.

- Literacy is promoted strongly. Teachers introduce key words and regularly challenge students to define meaning. As a result, students are able to produce high-quality written work using accurate, specialist vocabulary. Students with low literacy levels rapidly catch up through the literacy programme and small-group sessions.
- Additional adults in the classroom play a key role in helping students achieve. They have a good understanding of what is required to help individual students overcome any barriers to learning.
- Ongoing and regularly updated assessment provides a clear indication of achievement over time. It is common in lessons to hear teachers linking recent work to grades. In some lessons, students need more-explicit success criteria in order to judge the success of their work. Where marking is good, comments indicate what the student has done well to achieve. It links work to marking criteria, and outlines clear steps for improvement. Less-successful marking is ad hoc with little comment beyond 'good'.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- 'Be proud. Aim high. Work hard. Be nice. No excuses' is the motto created by the students. Students are proud of their school and embody these worthy expectations. The result is a mature approach to learning, a warm community which is welcoming to visitors, and exemplary behaviour. The students are excellent ambassadors for the school.
- Students have excellent relationships with staff. Students feel well supported and cared for. They told inspectors they were highly valued, felt their voice was heard and they were encouraged to do the very best they can.
- Students respect their environment and care for it well. The school is a very pleasant and purposeful place in which to learn.
- Students feel very safe and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. Bullying is very rare, and students report that staff deal effectively with any of the few incidents of poor behaviour that occur from time to time. Fixed-term exclusions have reduced over time.
- Students enjoy coming to school. Attendance is well above the national average. Attendance information is analysed regularly to make sure appropriate support can be provided before a problem arises.
- Students whose personal circumstances make them more likely to do less well receive high-quality support, and they progress through the school with high self-esteem.
- Opportunities for students to make a positive contribution to the life of the school are far-reaching. The Language College Ambassador Committee runs 14 international projects which are open to all students to participate in.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- Inspirational leadership and management from the headteacher with excellent support from the senior leadership team have led to significant improvements in attainment, teaching and leadership at all levels. The school has demonstrated exceptional capacity to improve further.
- The school's improvement plan provides clear direction based on evaluations of its own performance which are honest, rigorous and robust.
- Middle leaders are sharply aware of the school's strengths as well as the few areas in teaching which require further improvement. They readily challenge performance and drive improvements through tailored programmes of professional development. These programmes are designed to build the confidence of teachers to take risks in their teaching, and thus make learning more exciting for their students. Lesson observations and student progress information form the basis for staff's continuing professional development, as well as managing their performance.
- The headteacher's philosophy, 'One vision, one team, one voice', is highly valued by staff. Staff are extremely positive about all aspects of the school and many chose to voice just how positive

they feel to inspectors, such as 'We're now a fantastic school because of the changes the headteacher has made.'

- The school is a highly cohesive community with students from rich and diverse cultural heritages. They are supported through a flexible curriculum which strongly promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The mix of options, bridging courses, catch-up learning and induction courses prepares students well for examination courses. Students benefit from a wealth of clubs, visits and visitors.
- Close family liaison ensures that support can be given to develop language acquisition, and provides additional help to those whose circumstances could make them vulnerable.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The Chair of the Governing Body works very closely and very effectively with the school and there is no doubt that the governing body has helped the school to improve. It has played a key role in the allocation of the budget, including pupil premium funding, and this is improving the progress of these students. The regular training and briefing of governors has ensured that governors have a realistic view of the performance data of the school and the quality of teaching. Governors understand that teaching is a key focus to improve the school further. They ensure that teachers' pay is linked closely to their performance and they hold the school to account very well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102785
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	404841

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

<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>	1,233
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Irene Stephenson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Jacobs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8534 6791
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8555 3793
<b>Email address</b>	info@sarahbonnell.newham.sch.uk



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